

"EVERYDAY RACISM" IN POLICING: INTERVIEWS WITH AFRICAN
AMERICAN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

BY

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Analyses of race within the criminal justice system have tended away from examinations of the experiences of those intimately involved in the system on a daily basis. In this exploratory paper, conversations with fifty male and female African American police officers in a southern state are analyzed to understand the impact race has on decisions made in police agencies. Data from interviews are used to examine the notion of "everyday racism" developed by experiential-racism scholars which maintains that Black people have developed a cumulative and collective knowledge of racism due to their historical relation and experiences with racism. Using this knowledge, they are able to better understand racist attitudes and institutional barriers they

face in everyday situations. Examined in this project are institutional and interpersonal work place interactions; interactions within communities; and respondent experiences outside of the police occupational role. Respondents' accounts demonstrate considerable support for "everyday racism" and illustrate potential contexts and processes within police agencies impacted by racism that can be further examined and tested empirically.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The role race plays in the criminal justice system has been of great concern to both social scientists and the general public. There are several interpretations of how race impacts decisions made within various criminal justice system contexts. The current range of understanding can be illustrated through the conclusions drawn by three researchers. William Wilbanks (1987) argues that racism in the criminal justice system is a myth and that any discrimination can be shown to be contextual or promoted by the prejudices of individual system agents of all races. Disagreeing, Mann (1993) argues that racism is systematically found in all contexts of the criminal justice system at all times and reflects the historical domination of White people over other racial and ethnic groups. Walker et al. (1996) promote a notion that falls somewhere between the previous two by arguing that racism can be best understood as a disparity continuum in which racial discrimination exists in some, but not all, criminal justice contexts.

Despite numerous disagreements, these three approaches focus on policing as one of the most problematic contexts within the criminal justice system. Following is a summary of the current understanding of the relationship between policing and Black Americans.

Race and Policing

Historically, structural and ideological processes shape the relationship between race and policing. Mann argues that in America, state and private power have historically been used to control Black people and suppress their opposition to White economic and ideological hegemony. In fact, many history and law scholars have traced the origins of policing in the United States to the control of enslaved Africans and, after the Civil War, the free Black population.

In his study on police history, Walker (1977) illustrates the early link between partisan community politics and the use of police as a means of ensuring one group's power over less powerful opposition groups. Hawkins and Thomas (1991) look at how this link impacts White and Black relations and argue that police have been historically conceptualized as the first line of defense against the Black "hordes" through the socially demanded use of force and brutality. Zangrando (1980) illustrates how naked force and police power were used to subordinate Black southerners

after the Civil War. He details numerous instances in which police aided mobs in attacking Black citizens and demonstrates that White people exercised a monopoly on power in economics, politics, and raw physical force through the authority of law.

Beyond suppression, other scholars focus on the refusal of the law, including the police, to protect the civil rights of Black people as another social control strategy. Bell (1992) argues that Black lives have been devalued and not equally protected by the criminal justice system, which at the end of Reconstruction permitted a public escalation of violence by White people to the degree that Black people were virtually re-enslaved. The duration of this process, Tonry (1995) argues, did not only extend the pains of slavery and later legal discrimination but, even today, Black people in the US experience the sharpest disparities in the criminal justice system.

Recent analyses have sought to illustrate why Black communities are still disproportionately the focal point of policing by demonstrating the relationship of social control and its ideological justification. Keith (1991) maintains that structural forces of society in the 1980s and 1990s have interacted with the construction of a discourse that promotes the idea that Black communities are more "criminal" than others in order to legitimize the selective oppression

of these communities. These forces are varied. Magee (1994) argues that the courts have a vital role in this constructive process. She maintains that the "myth of the good cop" promoted by the courts grants undue deference to police judgment and illustrates a misplaced confidence that police will use discretion appropriately. Because police are seen as "good," she argues, and they disproportionately sanction Black males, the public comes to view Black males as stereotypically criminal, or "bad."

Walker (1977) notes the important role played by the mass media in shaping public perceptions of crime. Oliver (1994) conducted a content analysis of "reality-based" police shows and determined that White characters are more likely to be portrayed as police officers while Black and Latino characters were more likely to be portrayed as criminal suspects. Police officers were generally more "aggressive" than criminal suspects while Black and Latino suspects were more likely than White suspects to be the object of unarmed physical aggression by officers. The conclusion she drew is that the entertainment media portray Black people as "bad guys" and White officers as the restorers of justice.

To illustrate the active role of police in this constructive process, Chambliss (1994) argues that a coalition of political, law enforcement and media interests

have created a moral panic over crime in order to create growth in the crime industry. Similarly, Cashmore and McLaughlin (1991) argue that police promote the idea of crisis and relate social disorder with Black people in order to extend their political and legal powers while justifying increases in their resources. Bell (1992) maintains that this process creates and reinforces a stereotype in the minds of White people that provides moral, as well as legal, justification for the treatment of Black people by the criminal justice system.

In summary, these scholars argue that the structural and ideological forces that have operated to relegate Black people to secondary citizenship status in the United States are inextricably related to the origin and development of policing. The lack of economic and political power was translated into a lack of legal protection by which Black people became the victims of White violence and the objects of social control. The ideological justification for this social control is powerful, particularly in times of economic uncertainty and political crisis when law enforcement agencies, the media and political institutions create moral panics over crime that generally promote the public image of Black people as criminals that must be controlled.

Policing Black Communities

How these macro processes impact the perceptions and behaviors of White officers towards Black community members has been a topic of great interest and disagreement in literature on policing. Hawkins and Thomas (1991) argue that the construction of what they call a "White policing syndrome" has been carried over to the modern policing of urbanized communities and has an impact on how police perceive and treat members of Black communities. Offering support for this notion, scholars illustrate how White police officers reproduce these racial relationships in the daily performance of their jobs. Empirical research, however, has accumulated contradictory findings and demonstrated the importance of considering mediating variables in this relationship.

Police Perceptions

Bayley and Mendelsohn (1969) argue that police officers reflect the dominant attitudes of the majority toward minorities. The ideology of "Black" as "criminal," it seems, particularly affects police officers whose job it is to fight crime. Skolnick (1969) concludes that police attitudes and behaviors toward Black people differ vastly from those taken toward White people. Similarly, Sidanius et al. (1994) find support for the hypothesis that if the police social function is to maintain existing group-based hierarchy

systems, officers would have attitudes of ethnic group prejudice appropriate to their roles. A simple illustration of this finding is that many officers today believe that a racial marker is a sufficient reason to detain and search people (Bell, 1992).

Despite the seemingly clear logic that White officers reflect dominant group values in their treatment of Black citizens, participant observation and survey data on how officers perceive members of minority groups have yielded contradictory evidence. In an early examination, Black and Reiss (1967) concluded that racial attitudes were, for the most part, unrelated to the behavior of police officers. In 1977, Friedrich (in Sherman, 1980: 76) analyzed their data again and found that if officers disliked Black people, they were more likely to arrest Black suspects, but not differentially treat Black complainants. Citing a survey of Los Angeles police officers, Skolnick and Fyfe (1993) find that 25 percent agreed that racial prejudice affected officers' perceptions of minority groups. This is even more important in light of the conclusion of Bonilla-Silva and Lewis (1997) that most White people do not tell the truth about their racial attitudes on surveys. More recently, Ruby and Brigham (1996) looked at socio-economic and race variables to explain officers' perceptions in the US and

found that officers were more likely to view the actions of Black people as guilty.

Interesting studies on officer perception of minorities that have been conducted in the Netherlands yields some important insight to police attitudes. Vrij and Winkel (1992; 1994) have conducted experiments using several variables and found that skin color alone could not explain negative treatment of citizens by police. They found that Black nonverbal communication (1992; 1994) and the similarity of beliefs (1992) were significant factors. The latter, for example, means that those Black people who were seen by officers as sharing similar views were evaluated and treated better by the officers. Similarly, Vrij et al. (1992) found that certain nonverbal behavior during interviews influenced officers' negative impressions of members of ethnic minority groups. Interestingly they found that "Black" skin color is actually treated positively by police. One explanation could be that in an atmosphere where people are sensitive to being labeled as prejudiced officers are sophisticated enough to avoid labeling members of minority groups negatively. Another possible explanation can be found in the work of Essed (1991) who found Dutch racism to be "polite."

Other research has focused on officers' knowledge of communities rather than merely race to explain police

perceptions of minority group members. Michael Banton (1964) speculated that the police are more likely to adopt a service perspective in a neighborhood similar to their own. He concluded that the less social distance between the officer and the citizens in the neighborhood, the more likely the officer will adopt a helping orientation to encounters with citizens. Similarly, Michael K. Brown (1981:56) describes the major influences on police behavior as 1.) knowledge of the community and 2.) his or her interpretation of the community's expectations of how the police should act. On the other hand Bayley and Mendelsohn emphasize that race undoubtedly is an important perceptual issue when police have to gauge the possibility of harm coming to themselves due, in part, to the officers' sense of being inadequately trained to handle minority group problems. Racial segregation of communities promotes conditions in which officers lack an ability to understand the behavior of minority group members. Similarly, Barker finds that, other than the rare pathological personality, police brutality results from the result of fear and consequent overreaction based on perceptions to potentially dangerous situations. Lack of knowledge of a community or its citizens can heighten these perceptions.

In summary, although many scholars maintain that race has an effect on how officers perceive members of minority

groups, data drawn from surveys and experiments have, at best, contradictory findings. It appears that other factors, such as the nature of the encounter, similarity of belief systems, nonverbal behavior, officer's knowledge of assignment area and training, translate race and impact officers' perceptions of minority group members. Images of a dangerous community are often purely racist images not based on experience. Despite the nature of the relationship, perceptions and attitudes of officers must be considered when examining police behavior towards minority groups.

Police Behavior

The dominant assumption of most police literature is that the police role in society leads to a police subculture that operates to socialize officers and shape behavior. Walker (1977) argues that earlier generations of police officers had to be brutal in order to establish their personal authority in the community. Because of this antagonism with members of communities, over time, the police occupation has become increasingly isolated and based on internal solidarity and secrecy (Skolnick, 1969). Chevigny (1969) agrees that police behavior is the product of the police role as an instrument of authority in society, the traditions of police work, and the attitude of society toward the police. Belonging to this occupation, officers are influenced by other officers and learn to interpret

occupational rules and derive meaning from myriad impressions gathered in the everyday world (Bayley and Mendlesohn, 1969). This includes how officers learn to perceive members of minority groups.

The sense of isolation and difficulty communicating with superiors exacerbates a situation in which officers are inclined to devalue rules and find shortcuts around them (Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993). This leads Cray (1967) to argue that institutionalized malpractice, rather than the casual brutality of an individual officer, is the greater problem. Skolnick and Fyfe (1993) support this notion by illustrating how Black urban political power and community-sensitive police chiefs have promoted declining rates of police brutality. These studies illustrate that, rather than police officers merely being overtly racist, police behavior further manifests itself as racist to the extent that institutional controls are weak and the isolated subculture expresses racism and condones brutality.

Knowledge of the development of a police subculture and an understanding of how communities and departments can influence it can inform an understanding of overt forms of police behavior towards minority group members, although it cannot provide a firm explanation for the persistence of these behaviors. Contradictory interpretations of the results of research on arrest rates, the use of force and

police shootings illustrate the range of interpretations that are found in the literature.

Many researchers have examined the disproportionate number of Black men arrested and sent to prison to see if it is an example of racial bias in policing. Cray noted early on that there appeared to be a dual standard by which Black communities are more frequently patrolled and Black men more arrest prone. A White officer told him that, even for minor violations, there was an "open-season on Negroes" (1967: 185). Mason (1996) offers a more forceful indictment when he labels America as a Gulag for Black men increasingly arrested and incarcerated for drugs and minor crimes. Similarly, Tonry, while acknowledging that in fact "arrests can by and large be taken as reasonable reflections of the involvement in serious crime of members of different racial groups" (1995:71), maintains that the tactical emphasis of police departments on disadvantaged minority neighborhoods "produces racial proportions in arrests that do not mirror racial proportions in drug use" (1995:107).

However plausible these suppositions, Blumstein concludes that although racial discrimination cannot be dismissed as an explanation for arrest and incarceration rates, the finding of disproportionality does not by itself demonstrate the existence of discrimination. In clear opposition to the other researchers, Wibanks concludes from

his examination of empirical research that "controlling for levels of antagonism or seriousness of the offense eliminates the race/arrest relationship" (1987: 69)

Similarly, reviewing empirical studies on the use of force by police against minority groups, Wilbanks (1987) concluded that the evidence was unclear, but force could generally be explained by variables other than race. Walker et al. (1996) also found that, although a understanding of harassment may exist in the Black community, other variables such as class and criminal involvement have more explanatory power than racial discrimination. On the other hand, Lersch and Mieczkowski (1995) found that 97 percent of the victims of police brutality were non-White people, clearly indicating race as an important factor. Further, Lersch and Feagin (1996) examine newspaper accounts for major cities of recent police brutality and find that 92.8 percent of the offending officers were White and 86.3 percent of the victims were Black. More minority citizens were assaulted for lack of compliance than for posing a serious threat to the officer or another citizen. They conclude that race is an explanatory factor in these incidents due to the very small percentage of White victims. Further supporting the importance of race, although only 13 percent of these officers were penalized for their actions; Black officers,

despite their statistically low involvement, faced greater penalties.

In another area of study, researchers have noted that Black people are more likely to be shot and more likely to be killed by police but have failed to prove that racial discrimination on the part of White police can explain this difference. Geller and Karales (1981) and Blumberg (1983) have found that the proportion of Black victims is similar to the number of Black people arrested for violent crimes. They argue that shootings are situational and occur when there is a threat of serious danger to police officers. However, Fyfe examined shootings which involved no danger to police and found evidence of racial discrimination in Memphis, Tennessee, but not in New York City. His conclusion that examinations of shootings must be conducted on a city-by-city basis to determine incidence of racial discrimination support the notion of situationality. Despite the lack of a clear causal link, Walker et al. (1996) concluded that the significant decline in police shootings of Black citizens from 1975 to 1990 implies better police/minority group relations.

In summary, these studies examine forms of police behavior such as arrests, use of force and shooting, drawing contradictory conclusions as to how race and policing are related. Like the research on police perceptions, most of

these studies conclude that more statistically significant variables mediate the relationship between race and police behavior. However, the research on which these conclusions has been drawn have been critiqued as both theoretically and methodologically inadequate. Sherman (1980), for example, reviewed the literature and found that most of the reported relationships are weak, explaining only a quarter or so of the variance. Barker and Carter (1986) further note that methods of researching these issues are problematic for a variety of reasons including 1) generalizations are drawn beyond the scope of the study; 2) departments that are analyzed may not be representative of other departments; and 3) the research fails to account for race discrimination at the societal level which, they argue, is clearly responsible for much of the disproportionate representation of Black people as shooting victims. Further, noting problems shared by this body of research in defining concepts, Wilbanks (1987) posits that future research should carefully define race and racial discrimination.

Minority Group Perceptions of Police

Although examinations of racial prejudice in police perceptions and behavior have yielded inconclusive results, Black people's understanding of this behavior is important in light of Gunnar Myrdal's observation that, "The Negro's most important public contact is with the policeman. He is

the personification of white authority in the Negro community" (in Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993: 30). In the decades of urban unrest, this fact took on an increased significance in that the police played a prominent and controversial role in virtually all race riots of the period (Walker, 1977). Literature on community perceptions conclude that race affects perceptions of police although it may be mediated by neighborhood or situational contact with police officers.

Reaves (1991) states that Black people in Philadelphia in the 1960s clearly viewed White police as an occupying army. This statement is supported by a variety of investigative commissions in the 1960s that reported a deep hostility between police and residents of ghetto communities across the nation. The 1968 National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, for example, concluded that Black people firmly believed that brutality and harassment occur repeatedly in Black communities (Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993). Jacobs and Cohen (1978) summarized several studies that concluded that Black people regarded police with contempt and resented their presence. Years of experience with being beaten up and harassed culminates in what Skolnick describes as a state in which, "Blacks see the police not only as representing an alien White society, but also as advocating positions fundamentally at odds with its own aspirations" (1969: 260).

More recently, studies have used empirical techniques to gauge minority understandings of police. Sullivan et al. (1987) conducted a factor analysis and concluded that ethnicity was an important variable in determining attitudes towards police. In 1988, Alpert and Dunham found that in Miami Black people were much more negative and suspicious toward the police than Cuban people due to their historical relationship to police. Black people tended to view the police as representatives of the majority class. Conversely, one recent study found that citizen attitudes toward police were generally positive, particularly among women, and concluded that attitudes toward the police may not be regulated by the person's race per se, but by the social context in which the person is situated (Cao et al., 1996).

Other studies have found race to be important, but in relation to neighborhood culture. Decker (1981) conducted an exhaustive review of literature and determined that race was the most important variable in determining individual attitudes toward police, although neighborhood culture was an important contextual variable. Even if individual Black people had no personally negative experience with police, it seemed that pervasive neighborhood beliefs affected their individual attitudes. Similarly, Schuman and Gruman (1972: found race to be an important factor in explaining satisfaction and dissatisfaction with police services, but

found that within race variation was largely accounted for by neighborhood. Finally, Walker et al. (1990) found that it was the nature of the contact and the cumulative contextual effect within the neighborhood that best accounted for the low level of support for the police shown among Black people.

In summary, despite contradictory findings of the relationship of race and policing in the literature on police perceptions and behavior, the literature on Black perceptions of police officers is clearer. Most Black people discuss negative experiences with the police and argue that race does impact their perceptions of policing, although most of the literature discussed above concludes there are some factors such as neighborhood and nature of police contact mediating the relationship of race and policing. Finally, Skolnick noted the historical significance of the relationship when he stated that, judging from prior studies, "there is no reason to suppose that anti-Black hostility is a new development brought on by recent conflicts between the police and the black community. What appears to have changed is not police attitudes, but the fact that black people are fighting back" (1969: 242-243).

Black Police Officers

The most complete history of Black officers (Dulaney, 1996) divides them into three distinct generations: the

crime fighters, the reformers and the professionals. From the period of Reconstruction to the 1940s "tough, brutal" Black officers maintained order in Black communities. In the 1950s and 1960s, reformers attempted to redefine Black officers by the creation of Black police associations and the recruitment of better educated men that would promote community relations. Finally, the professionals of the 1970s aimed to end racism in departments and began to see themselves as "public servants" reducing racial tension while protecting Black citizens from criminals through innovation and improved community relations.

According to Dulaney (1996) the 1960s, in fact, mark a quantitative as well as qualitative change in Black policing. As grassroots political movements grew and urban riots became more frequent, Black citizens began to demand political power which translated into greater numbers of Black officers; the integration of Black officers in police agencies was promoted as a solution to community tension. Many felt that Black officers would be more sensitive to members of Black communities, be less brutal, less likely to harass and would, therefore, inspire their trust and reduce tension. Since several large, primarily northern, cities had effectively used small numbers of Black officers to police Black communities for more than a century, administrations

were confident that Black people could be effective police officers (Dulaney, 1996).

A related, yet separate solution promoted to overcome tensions between communities and police centered on the development of community-oriented or problem solving policing. These strategies stressed greater cooperation and communication between communities and police departments and a de-emphasis on traditional patrol and control strategies. As a philosophical solution to practical dilemmas, it, like the hiring of Black officers, has been applied unevenly; however, the link between creating community policing and hiring officers representative of those communities continues to be strong. A popular sentiment of the community policing philosophy, scholars argue, is that police officer representativeness is critical. "Policing should reflect and be informed by the values and views of all people served, and all the people should at least occasionally see others who look like them in police uniform" (Skolnick and Fyfe, 1993: 241).

In conjunction with the political necessity of hiring Black officers was the necessity of Black people to find employment with benefits and escape deprived conditions. Alex (1969) termed this a "natural symbiosis" between departments and unemployed Black men and women. He argued that including Black people in policing had less to do with

opening jobs to all members of the community and more with pacifying the Black community and winning the political support of its members; however, jobs were the reasons many decided to become police officers.

The convergence of numerous factors, therefore, including Black political power, the need for jobs by Black people, and the White desire to pacify and control Black communities, culminated in a new phase of the history of Black people as police officers. Nevertheless the problem remained how to overcome White opposition to the hiring and retention of Black police officers.

Hiring

In 1972, the Employment Opportunities Act (EOA) passed and empowered the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to fight discrimination in employment through, among other means, the use of lawsuits which allowed Black officers to shape practices within police departments with the backing of legal authority. Walker (1985) notes that many if not most of the major police departments have been sued over employment practices since the inception of the EOA. Goals were established to achieve equal opportunity by the formation of an Equal Employment Opportunity Index (EEOI) to ensure that the percentage of minority officers in a department reflects the percentage of minority group

members living in the community; an index of 1.0 represents racial parity.

After the implementation of these guidelines, Walker looked at trends in hiring minority officers in the 50 largest US cities from 1972 to 1982 and found little advancement towards meeting EEOI guidelines. Walker and Turner (1992) updated the previous study and found modest progress over the ten year period from 1983 to 1992; however, progress varied by minority group. Thirty-eight percent of departments had achieved the ideal level (.75 in this study) for Black officers, 20 percent for Latino officers and none for female officers. Stokes and Scott later surveyed safety commissioners and/or police chiefs in the 26 cities included in the 1968 report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders to measure the effect of affirmative action on police representation. Using Walker's hypothetical EEOI index they concluded that although modest progress has been made, with the exception of Washington, DC, there continued to be an underrepresentation of Black officers relative to the percentage of Black people in city populations. They found that 30 percent of those cities still had low compliance. Both Walker and Lewis concluded that factors contributing to the successful achievement of the EEOC standards are 1) Black political power; cities with elected Black mayors had

highest percentages of Black officers; 2) employment discrimination litigation; progress in hiring was found to be particularly significant in police agencies under court-order; and 3) administrative (Black or White) leadership committed to minority employment.

Therefore, the demand in the 1960s to hire more Black officers resulted in a practical legal solution to encourage their representation in departments; equality in employment came to be determined by the EEOI formula. However, there remained a variety of factors that act to limit Black representation in police departments. Radelet (1986) concluded that these factors range from departmental barriers to the recruiting and swearing in of Black officers, to social marginality in terms of education and criminal records, to personal reasons such as fear of being labeled a traitor, to aspirations for a better life through other occupations. To test these factors, Hochstedler and Conley (1986) mailed survey questionnaires to police departments in the 150 largest US cities and concluded that the most plausible explanation was that Black people choose not to pursue a police career; although this choice may be a "constrained" choice. Stokes and Scott focus on this constraint and argue that economic, political, legal and ideological factors come together in particular locations to effect EEO indexes. Lewis (1989) found, for example, that as

the Black percentage of the city labor force increased, resistance to affirmative action within police departments was likely to persist or increase.

The considerable resistance to hiring Black officers by police agencies is manifested through a variety of strategies. Processes within police departments which adversely affect Black officers have been documented in the autobiographies of, and early interviews with, Black officers (Alex, 1969; Leinen, 1984; and Reaves, 1991) and have served to guide empirical examinations. For example, Jacobs and Cohen (1978) cited hiring freezes, and subjective standards such as 'neatness' used to circumvent the hiring of minorities. Pynes (1992) further acknowledges that the cognitive ability test of the initial assessment process usually has an adverse impact on minority candidates because candidates only provide verbal descriptions of expected behavior rather than demonstrating actual behavior. This promotes subjective interpretations of minority candidates by evaluators and has resulted in numerous law suits for discrimination that have ended with the courts mandating changes in favor of minority group candidates. Other research has concluded that, although the race of the candidate may be important, the race of the evaluator may not be. Prewett's (1994) experiment in Alabama found that candidates' performance did not significantly vary with the

racial composition of the panel members. Possible explanations could revolve around constraints felt by Black officers in positions of authority.

Promotions

The promotion process has also been examined as a context in which racial discrimination can occur through factors such as subjective evaluation, despite guidelines which promote nominally objective procedures. Walker (1985) identified three primary areas where this can occur: performance ratings and evaluations by supervisors; personal interviews with higher-ranking officers; and certain assignments which can be "dead-end." The empirical work of Wendelken and Inn (1981) only provides modest support for the first two areas. They conducted a multivariate analysis on performance evaluations and found significant effects for ratee and rater race, as well as 'ratee, rater' interaction; however, these variables combined accounted for no more than four percent of the total variance.

Despite the lack of stronger empirical evidence, Black officers' perceptions of discriminatory promotional processes can affect their performance. Gaines et al.(1984) emphasize the importance of promotion and assignment on officer motivation. This research concluded that officers like to feel that they have the ability to do a good job and be rewarded for it by being allowed to develop more

satisfying interests. This helps to explain Teahan's (1975) observation that Black officers became increasingly disillusioned with their departments and began to have a greater sense of unity with each other. These officers began to feel that White officers were given preference and that their goals could only be achieved through Black collectivity. Buzawa (1984) found that in departments with successful affirmative action policies and Black executives, Black officers expressed greater job satisfaction- although White officers expressed greater dissatisfaction for the same reasons.

Many have assumed that tensions between police departments and community members, as well as the persistent problems Black officers encounter within the department, can be overcome by the presence of Black law enforcement executives (Criminal Justice Institute 1985). Bannon and Wilt (1973), for example, found that officers felt that top-ranking, command-level Black officers can have a positive effect on communities by establishing rapport with citizens and ensuring that officers treat citizens in a fair and equal manner. Dulaney (1996) further praises Black executives, noting that they are the new innovators in the police profession. He maintains that they deliberately solicit support from the communities they serve and are immune to charges of racism from minority community members.

However, improved community relations do not necessarily mean that Black executives treat Black officers differently than they do other officers. To illustrate, Uhlman's (1978) study of 16 Black judges found that, although they may act symbolically as positive representatives to and of their race and substantively as educators and reformers, Black judges display behavioral diversity unrelated to their common racial background; their sanctioning patterns differ only marginally from those of White judges. Leinen (1984), while stressing the important role of command staff in shaping the occupational environment, noted that promoting Black officers to supervisory positions do not necessarily result in improved conditions for other Black officers. He notes, "the inability (of these supervisors) to develop the network of informal, interlevel and intergroup ties needed to exercise effectively the power vested in their position" (1984: 70).

Supporting this notion, Reaves (1991) noted that he had been promoted to supervisory positions without legitimate authority, although subject to more scrutiny. Skolnick and Bayley cite an example that gives insight into the complexity of how Black command staff meets the demands of both Black and White officers. Officers in Los Angeles had complained that new chief Willie Williams was "too" fair. They charged that Black officers had been discriminated

against for years and that they now deserved more than equality of treatment; they deserved affirmative action to make up for the years when White officers enjoyed the political spoils. Chief Williams responded that assignment policies already favored Black officers, deliberately, but at the same time rules and departmental policies apply equally to everybody. "When I am judging I am color blind. When I am promoting, I am color conscious" (1986: 188).

Police Culture

The literature indicates that not only Black command staff but all Black officers seem to be caught in a dilemma between being Black and being a police officer, although little research has been conducted that examines relationships between police officers of different racial groups within police departments. Earlier work focused on the stressful atmosphere Black officers face in dealing with traditional police subculture (Alex, 1969; Leinen, 1984). Beard's (1977) survey of 947 of 1,050 Washington, DC Black police officers found that most rarely socialized with White officers, 65 percent reported that they trusted few or no White officers and more than 80 percent believed that Black officers were discriminated against in hiring, assignments, evaluations and rewards and discipline. However, despite the claims of Hochstedler and Conley (1986) discussed previously, most wanted police careers because of the

perception that this job was as good or better than others in its treatment of Black people and that it provided them with a higher status. Bannon and Wilt's (1973) open-ended interviews with Detroit officers obtained comments about the "subtle" nature of discriminatory practices that were "well disguised, hard to prove and too numerous to mention." Runnels succinctly summed up the dilemma faced by Black officers when he stated, "the black policeman has two choices--stay and deal with it--or quit" (1989: 56).

Some researchers concentrate on how Black officers develop strategies of resistance to stressful situations. Employing a social constructionist theoretical framework, Simon Holdaway (1997) interviewed 59 Black and Asian officers in England to determine the effect of the occupational culture of policing on the construction of racialized categories. The study concluded that there were clearly defined, strong pressures within the police occupational culture to force officers to conform to racialized categories that inform both relationships within police contexts as well as relationships with the public. These categories function to maintain a hierarchy in which White, Black and Asian officers understand their place. However, the occupational culture was found to be dynamic and racialized ascriptions are open to redefinition and renegotiation within the routine of work and relationships

among colleagues. Because the pressure to conform is considerable, Black officers develop strategies of resistance which include humor (Holdaway, 1997), collectivity and law suits (Alex, 1969 and Leinen, 1984), and the emergence of a politicized Black officer (Jacobs and Cohen, 1978).

Other researchers note how the pressure to conform begins to force Black officers to have a greater identification with White officers and/or the police subculture. Alex (1969) notes that secondary occupational status coupled with the desire to maintain a positive self image as a "good," professional officer can culminate in what Runnels (1989) labels as the philosophy that "blue is blue." Glazer (1995), for example, quotes former officers as saying that extended police training forces officers to act according to their occupational role in order to advance and receive good evaluations. Reaves (1991) argues that these officers jealously guard their positions from other Black officers, limiting their critiques of White officers in general and departmental policies specifically. They take on more conservative values, and can, as Runnels does, openly attack pro-minority policies such as Affirmative action. In this way, initial Black and White conflict is reproduced in such a way as to affect the occupational and interpersonal relationships among Black officers. The complexity of the

dilemma which Black officers face is still not well understood. Rather than attempting to unravel this process through ethnographic research shedding light on the relationship between race and policing, researchers have preferred to examine manifestations of police behavior and draw inferences.

Black Police Behavior

Early advocate of reducing community-police tension argued that the presence of Black officers would significantly alter policing in America. Skolnick and Fyfe (1993) maintained that Black officers were supposed to reduce community tension two ways: community members were to see Black police officers and feel that their department was representative; and the mere presence of Black officers was to affect the actions of White partners and make them more sensitive. So entrenched are these views that today there remains a push for increased minority representation in policing (Pelle, 1992).

After the inclusion of large numbers of Black officers in police departments in the late 1960s and 1970s, research was undertaken to compare Black and White police officer behavior to see if the former really met the high expectations. Most researchers concluded that, when other variables were held constant, White and Black officers do not behave in manners that are substantively different.

One type of study examined the incidence of police shootings to compare the behavior of Black and White officers. Although varying methodological techniques have been used to measure the relationship between race of the officer and the incidence of shooting, nothing conclusive has been found. Two studies found that Black officers had higher shooting rates, although the differences could be explained by assignment location and the residence of Black officers and their higher off-duty shooting rates (Fyfe, 1980; Geller and Karales, 1981). In a later study, Fyfe (1981) again failed to find a significant relationship between race of officer and shootings.

Other research also found few if any differences between Black and White officers and, in fact, the former may use greater force against Black citizens (Reiss, 1971) and arrest them in greater numbers (Black, 1980). Both Sherman's (1980) and Wilbank's (1987) reviews of empirical studies concluded that Black and White officers had similar arrest patterns. Sidanius et al. (1994) found that Black officers were less social-dominance oriented in attitudes than their White counterparts; however, Black officers were found to have higher levels of punitiveness, which the researchers concluded could be due to occupational frustration and/or an exaggerated demonstration of loyalty to White officers. Reaves (1991) notes that in Philadelphia

complaints were brought against Black police officers at about the same rate as against White officers.

In summary, although it is assumed that Black officers provide many benefits, especially improved behavior and treatment of minority group members, empirical evidence has failed to generate support for that prediction. In their extended examination of police deviance, Barker and Carter (1986) fail to systematically distinguish between the deviance of police officers by race/ethnicity or by gender. Walker (1985) similarly concludes that evidence to date does not support the reform assumption that hiring minorities significantly alters policing; however, both studies, as well as Jacobs and Cohen (1978), conclude that more research is needed to examine the relationship between officer characteristics and officer behavior in relation to the organizational and structural factors of their departments.

Black Officers and the Community

Evidence from early studies about the nature of relationships between Black officers and the Black community was contradictory. Some found that Black officers felt that they had a positive impact on Black communities evaluations of police because of the officer's greater knowledge of the community and its cultural norms, a greater desire to effect positive change and consequently, the ability to provide a better service to Black communities (Groves and Rossi 1970;

Bannon and Wilt 1973). Beard (1977) found that black officers generally wanted to make the community a better place to live, but almost 50 percent felt more respected by White citizens than Black citizens and 80 percent lived outside of the community where they worked. On the other hand, Alex (1969) maintained that Black officers were harder on Black citizens and these citizens, in turn, regard Black officers as "Uncle-Toms." Jackson and Wallach (1973) and Leinen (1984) both reported that Black citizens do not necessarily prefer Black police officers to White police officers and concluded that hiring Black police will not necessarily increase the police department's legitimacy in Black communities.

However, another study dealt with the contacts between officers and citizens and found that race and ethnicity may affect the quality of the encounter. Garratt et al. (1981) conducted experiments and found that Black subjects demonstrated a significant preference for officers employing a knowledge of Black nonverbal behaviors and spatial arrangements. They argue that training in how to perceive minority group behavior is an important solution to current problems. Bayley and Mendelsohn (1969) similarly concluded that ethnicity affects whom the public becomes personally acquainted with. However, in the face of disagreements and contradictory information on the effect of Black officers on

community relations, Runnels states from experience and talking with other officers, "those of you who say the community has accepted the Black cop, I say to you, HOGWASH" (1989: 39).

Since the 1970s there has been a lack of studies examining changes in community attitudes due to hiring minority officers and no studies that specifically ask citizen respondents for impressions of officers by race or gender. Research that has been conducted has sought to identify other factors that may affect community impressions. A review of literature found that most studies since 1980 conclude that community attitudes may be shaped more by a general image of the department than its individual officers (Criminal Justice Institute 1985). Jacobs and Cohen (1978), for example, suggested that tension between police and the community may just be a function of the police role instead of race. Looking at fourteen cities at one particular period in time, Decker and Smith (1980) concluded that the lack of positive change in community perceptions could be due to socioeconomic conditions, the low numbers of Black police in departments or that Black police had been integrated into traditional police subcultures.

Cashmore (1991) weaves these factors together and argues that the recruitment of Black police officers and the

appointment of Black supervisors and chiefs reflects the larger movement in American society to create a Black bourgeois class to act as a buffer between the White community and the masses of the Black poor. Those who become members of the middle class through policing have the double function of legitimating the American political and economic system and controlling Black underclass citizens who can never participate in the American dream, he argues. Black representation in police departments, therefore, is seen as benefiting only Black officers and is no guarantee of social justice for Black people in general. He concludes that the seizing of opportunities and the self-assertion of Black people to become police officers is ironic in that it has resulted in frustration for members of Black communities and the assimilation of the individual officers into the dominant culture. Black officers are often seen as individuals who have absorbed the attitudes and values of the police identity and assumed the typical police personality while promoting the image of themselves as representatives of the communities they co-opt and control.

Recently, telephone polls have been used to measuring the relationship between race and perceptions of the criminal justice system in general and the police specifically. A telephone survey in Detroit found that, despite considerable conflict in the 1960s, Black citizens

now hold more favorable attitudes towards police than do white citizens (Frank et al., 1996). The researchers concluded that the increased Black population, the increased representation of Black officers on the force, a Black police chief and a Black mayor were the major reasons for the change. Another telephone survey in Cincinnati measuring race and support for police found similar responses of White and Black respondents to police use of deadly force when offenders were considered dangerous; however, Black respondents differed from White respondents by demonstrating a lack of support for illegal use of force. The researchers concluded that this difference may be found in the fact that Black people are generally more ideologically liberal than White people. Finally, in the aftermath of the O.J. Simpson trial, a Gallup Poll survey found that the case tarnished Black perceptions of the criminal justice system and the police. In considerable opposition to the sentiments of White respondents, 66 percent of Black people polled accepted the statement that the criminal justice system is biased against Black people while 63 percent say they would not value the testimony of a police witness above others (Saad and McAneny, 1995). It seems that Black people in general have less faith in the criminal justice system; however, it is interesting to note that the poll conducted in Detroit, a city with Black political and police

leadership, found that Black citizens had positive impressions of police. This finding implies that a racially representative police force can positively impact the community.

A final, relatively unexplored question, considers the Black officer's experiences out of uniform as a member of the Black community. The limited literature that exists on this topic reveals a dilemma for Black officers of seeing themselves as Black people or as police officers. Tonry (1995) speculates that middle-class Black people, including off duty Black police officers, receive better treatment from police officers. However, Runnels laments, with great frustration, an incident in which he was pulled over, harassed, and, after he complained to a superior officer, being insulted and talked down to. Johnson (1989) finds that the stress and frustration of being a Black officer are being translated into negative effects on marital interaction leading to separation and divorce. Although understudied, the treatment of out-of-uniform Black officers by the society at large seems to be important in shaping both their self-images and occupational performance.

Current Understanding

In summary, dilemmas faced by Black officers within their occupation role have been considered important in determining their self-image, their relationships with other

officers, how they behave in the performance of their jobs, and their relationships with members of the Black community. However, research on Black officers is deficient in several regards and has been unable to promote a clear understanding of these officers and their net effect on police agencies and the communities they police.

There has been little integration between theory and analysis; most empirical studies are scattered and are not theoretically driven. Importantly this translates into a lack of clarity in the definition of important concepts such as the meaning of "race" and "racism" beyond common usage of these terms. Without a clear theory of race and/or the operation of racism in American society informing research, interpretations of results have promoted confusion and contradictions.

Methodologically, studies of police behavior have not changed much since Sherman's observation that they are, "best characterized as a series of bivariate assertions about the impact of certain variables on police behavior about which a moderate amount of empirical evidence has accumulated" (1980: 70). In fact, many empirical studies acknowledge race as being problematic, largely due to the actions of courts in support of officer grievances. Many of these studies then attempt to explain how variables other

than race impact these processes without developing a clear understanding of race.

Further, methods of research used to date largely ignore the experiential input of these officers, choosing instead to examine manifestations of their activities and draw inferences. The limited number of interviews with officers (Alex, 1969; Leinen, 1984) and autobiographies of officers (Reaves, 1991; Runnels, 1989) share the problem of being scattered, rare and largely descriptive and generally lacking a clear theoretical base. These works, further, are limited to officer experiences in the 1960s and 1970s which may be different from experiences of officers today. Importantly, all studies of Black officers omit Black women officers, and studies of women officers omit Black women.

Finally, with the exception of the experiences of Runnels (1989), these studies focus on Black officers in large northern cities. There is a clear lack of studies examining policing in rural areas and there have been no in-depth examinations of Black officers in Southern police departments. Therefore, results to date may not be generalized to the entire population of Black police officers and, at best, descriptively illustrate processes in particular departments. However, inferences drawn from research have been used, not only to make generalizations about policing, but about the nature of the relationship

between race and the criminal justice system as well. Despite a body of research with, for the most part, contradictory findings and conclusions, some researchers argue that a demonstrable lack of difference between Black and White officers proves that race is not an important factor in policing.

Although not able to answer all of these concerns, recent studies on women officers employing qualitative and ethnographic methods suggest that there are others ways to examine this topic.

Women Police Officers

Insight on how to study Black officers can be gained from the recent interest in examining women police officers. Women entered policing in great numbers at about the same time as Black men did and under similar legal and political circumstances. Similar forms of discrimination have been encountered by women and Black officers; however, studies indicate that Black women officers are unique in their experiences and self-images. Importantly, although Black women officers are underrepresented in this body of research, the qualitative interview methods employed by the researchers are effective in forming rich descriptions of the experiences and interpretations of women and helpful, particularly in the case of Martin (1994), in relating interactive experiences to structural and ideological

processes. These types of studies have been effective in developing an understanding of the complexity of how race and gender affect policing.

Kerry Segrave (1995) succinctly traces the history of women in policing from the matron period of the late nineteenth century to the present using historical databases, newspaper indexes and memoirs of some of the earliest policewomen. She emphasizes the importance structural changes in the US due to grassroots organization, political lobbying and changes in governmental policies and laws that created a space for women in policing both in the early part of the century and again in the 1960s. Through political agitation women gained a foothold in policing; however, their roles have been limited to an almost token status because of considerable opposition expressed by the male police establishment. Rampant insults, intimidation and harassment coupled with the placement of policewomen in typing and filing positions had the effect of limiting the desire of women to advance and made them unsure that they could do the job. Segrave concludes that conditions within police departments have never improved significantly for women and that, despite years of affirmative action, the percentage of policewomen remains at about 10 percent nationally and may drop if challenges to affirmative action are upheld changing hiring initiatives.

Researchers, including ethnographers, have examined this integration into departments and agree that women face considerable resistance and discrimination from male officers and consequently suffer high levels of stress. Studies have found that male officers treat women as a general class and not based on women's individual characteristics (Martin, 1980; Weisheit, 1987). Numerous studies have outlined institutional barriers, interpersonal harassment and other sources of stress experienced by women officers and women prison guards (Balkin, 1988; Belknap, 1991; Bell, 1982; FDLE, 1994; Jurik, 1985; Poole and Pogrebin, 1988; Wexler and Logan, 1983) which result in the perception that they are women who are police and not "policewomen." In fact, reasons for harassment and ill treatment center around traditional ideas of policing as being a masculine profession (Balkin, 1988). Women officers, therefore, begin to feel that they can not advance.

In response to this treatment and the resulting stress, officers who remain must develop survival mechanisms. For example, Wexler's (1985) work discusses various coping techniques that women develop to deal with conflicts generated by demands of both gender and occupational roles. Despite the confrontational environment encountered by women, numerous studies (Belknap, 1996; Fyfe, 1989; Sichel et al., 1978) have concluded that, generally, there are no

significant differences in the performances of male and female officers. Further, community perceptions may be that female officers are more empathetic, communicate better and, reduce levels of violence in police-citizen confrontations.

Although Segrave (1995) and others paint a convincing picture of the lone, silent, stressed-out policewoman suffering considerable harassment on a daily basis with little recourse but to accept it or quit, most research fails to distinguish between the experiences of women of different racial and ethnic groups other than positing that these women are victims of both gendered and racialized harassment. Despite the acknowledgment that Black women face greater disadvantages in advancement, the way gender and race interact and the impact this has on Black policewomen is dealt with only spuriously. The assumption seems to be that women are treated badly generally and, "coupled" with race, Black women are treated worse.

This omission is important considering work such as Chigwada's (1991) that argues that Black women and White women are traditionally perceived very differently by police. She maintains that Black women have been portrayed as social deviants by the media and, therefore, are more likely to be perceived of by police as capable of committing criminal acts. Further, she that argues, they are a more vulnerable, less politically powerful group and are more

likely to find themselves confronted and questioned by police. Townsey (1982) is one of the few researchers to specifically examine Black women officers. Although improvement can be seen, she finds that institutional racism coupled with sexism operate as a monumental disadvantage to these women. She notes differences in assignment and rank as evidence of the difficulties Black women face and concludes that many women begin to rationalize that they really are not interested in advancement. Martin (1994), in her examination of racism and sexism as interlocking systems of oppression, demonstrates how Black women have a unique role in agencies in that their experiences are different from other women as well as from Black men. She concludes that these women face multiple ambiguities in how they are treated by co-workers and distinguishing with what groups they have common allegiances.

The above discussion illustrates that an understanding of the complex nature of the relationship of race and policing can be furthered by examining the voices of Black officers. Allowing them to discuss their perceptions, describe their experiences and offer their interpretations of policing and the criminal justice system can increase scholarly awareness of the operation of race and racism in this institutional context and point to specific areas of further research and analysis.

The Present Study

The present study is concerned with the experiences of, and the perceptions of policing held by, Black police officers. These officers may have a unique comprehension of how race affects policing. This analysis will focus on how Black officers experience and discuss policing. It will look for themes that deal with race and descriptions of particular manifestations of racialized perceptions and behavior. It will examine how officers see themselves as well as their relations with their co-workers, departments and the communities in which they live and work.

This project examines Black police officers through an application of the concept "everyday racism" developed by scholars who have developed an experiential-racism framework. Using Everyday Racism (Essed, 1991) as a model, this project will seek to more clearly understand how race impacts different aspects of policing. Essed's work is an informative approach from a theoretical perspective that permits an understanding of how race operates daily at various levels and in diverse forms in today's society. In addition to its theoretical strength, it demands a methodological approach such as an open-ended conversational interview which provides respondents sufficient space to voice their experiences and concerns.

Philomena Essed (1991) maintains that her work was an exploratory study which should be tested further on other groups of Black people. The purpose of this research is, therefore, to explore how an experiential-racism framework can be used to examine interactions of race in policing; applying it in ways that have practical and sociological significance.

Theoretical Framework

The "New Realists" of criminological theory discuss the problem of examining race in the criminal justice system and find theoretical and methodological deficiencies that inhibit a clear understanding of the relationship. Fitzgerald (1996), for example, maintains that the solution to these problems center on acknowledging racism as a given in our society. It must be conceptualized, she argues, not as a 'thing' in and of itself, but as a dynamic process produced, and reproduced, by a wide range of interactions between combinations of factors. If this notion of race is to be adequately examined, qualitative research can help to frame appropriate research questions and to allow respondents to identify the range of variables which must be covered if research data are to be interpreted satisfactorily.

Fitzgerald further maintains that an examination of the first hand accounts of the experiences and perceptions of

system agents will help to uncover relevant features of the organizational context within which criminal justice decisions are made. These features will illustrate the impact on the criminal justice system and its agents of external social and political factors such as racism. This is a departure from most criminological research which examines the outcome of interactions between system agents and citizens. Although it is not clear whether Fitzgerald envisioned research with Black system agents, her notion of how to examine race is unique in criminology.

Similarly, Essed (1991) is concerned with the totality of how racism operates in the modern social order and how it is reflected in the reported experiences of those it impacts most profoundly. She engages in a systematic analysis of the cumulative experiences of Black people focusing on how racism permeates everyday life and forms the base of knowledge by which Black people learn to define whether situations are racist and to respond accordingly. Her work is important in that it goes beyond a focus on the manifestations of racism, such as incidents and attitudes, and focuses on the cognition of that racism as a lived experience among Black women. She argues that shortcomings in understanding how racism operates due, in part, to the fact that, "little attention has been paid to the knowledge, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes of Blacks with respect to

the meaning of racism" (1991: 7). She posits that studies of racism tend to concentrate on its extreme manifestations when they should, instead, focus on how Black people come to understand the whole complex of racial structures, ideologies and daily experience.

Her definition of racism runs counter to prevalent views that racism is an individual problem or only manifest in isolated acts. Essed defines everyday racism, "as a process in which (1) socialized racist notions are integrated into meanings that make practices immediately definable and manageable; (2) practices with racist implications become, in themselves, familiar and repetitive; and (3) underlying racial and ethnic relations are actualized and reinforced through these routine or familiar practices in everyday situations" (1991: 52). The implication of this definition is that expressions of racism in a particular social relation are related to all other racist practices and have meaning only in relation to the whole complex of structural and ideological relations in society. The significance of this formulation is that racism cannot be merely understood as an activity of specific individuals or specific institutional and/or cultural context, it must be understood by how it operates in the "fabric" of the social system. "'Everyday racism' was introduced to cross boundaries between structural and interactional approaches to racism and to

link details of micro experiences to the structural and ideological context in which they are shaped" (1991: 288).

Racism, therefore, is understood as having ideological, structural and interpersonal components. Race is defined as an ideological construction because, Essed maintains, "the idea of race has never existed outside of a framework of group interest" (1991: 43). Racism as ideology, she argues, is the cement that preserves White ideological unity and is present in everyday activities. Racism is a structure because racial domination "is reproduced by the system through the formulation and application of rules, laws, and regulations and through access to and the allocation of resources" (1991: 44). Finally, racism is a process because ideology and structure "do not exist outside of the everyday practices through which they are created and confirmed" (1991: 44).

Rather than viewing racism as somehow an innate aspect of the human consciousness, she feels that the structural domination of Black people and race prejudice developed together and have served to reinforce each other over time. Attitudes of prejudice or acts of discrimination are not important in and of themselves; they are only relevant as "reflections of socially shared representations of racial and ethnic groups" (1991:45). Therefore, these attitudes and acts are important in their insight into the social context

in which these beliefs and acts operate; people are seen as agents of structural practices and ideologies:

The relation between racist ideology and racist practices is determined by the historical, material, and political context and by the degree to which ideologies are saturated in the cognitions of agents. When agents are socialized with and systematically exposed to representations that justify White dominance, and when these notions are (unwittingly) accepted as 'normal,' agents will act in concert, thereby creating and reproducing similar forms of racism adapted to the specific needs or interests and situations. (1991:46)

Human agency, therefore, operates within structural boundaries; humans make their own decisions and choices within structural constraints. However, awareness of these boundaries and reasons for choices is not essential because people can behave in racist manners unintentionally. Essed maintains that, "because discrimination and prejudice are fused in the notion of racist practices, there are no grounds to identify intentionality as a necessary component of the definition of racism" (1991: 50). Furthermore, although structure and ideology operate to constrain human agency, individuals can choose to resist and produce alternative, non-racist, ways to employ power for the purpose of change. White people, therefore, can be agents for the reproduction of racism in daily life or resisters who attempt to change society. The other side of this formulation is that Black people can become "involved in the

formulation and enactment of racist policies" (1991:43). By not conceptualizing a rigid formulation of racism, Essed's work has direct practical application in that understanding more clearly how racism works is an essential component of changing the societal practices and ideologies which perpetuate it.

In developing a key component of her theory, Essed begins by illustrating that racism can be distinguished by the forms in which it is manifested. Overt racism, for example, refers to acts that openly express negative intentions toward Black people. Covert racism, on the other hand, cannot be inferred from the act itself, but the definition of the act seems negotiable within the conflict situation. Essed argues that, since Black people operate from experiences and a unique knowledge of racism, they have greater insight into covert racism than White people who may dismiss the behavior or act for other reasons. In fact, marginalized minority groups, such as Black people, have a greater insight into how racism operates due to their collective experience with oppression and the cumulative stock of knowledge they share. Experiences with racism, therefore, comprise a cumulative process of knowledge acquisition in which the new experiences of Black people "are interpreted and evaluated against the background of earlier personal experiences, vicarious experiences, and

general knowledge of racism in society" (Essed, 1991: 8). Individuals are socialized by their elders and others with a fundamental stock of knowledge needed to cope in everyday situations; how to move about and survive in a social world that they must learn to handle. For Black people in a racist society, this means that they have a special stock of knowledge as to racist attitudes, behaviors and acts that White people are not necessarily privileged to.

Race relations are therefore complex and racism as a process is present in everyday situations and serves to activate underlying power relations. "To study everyday racism it is, therefore, necessary to analyze it as a process manifesting itself in multiple relations and situations in everyday life" (1991:36). Cognition and behavior operate synchronically so it is not useful to conceptually separate prejudice from discrimination or either from racism. Essed concludes that, because racism continues to be a determining factor in the lives of Black people, insight into the structural and ideological aspects of racism can be gained by locating how it operates in the experiences of individuals in the social context of their everyday lives.

Support for Essed

That racism is a complex, dynamic process has been well documented by scholars working within an experiential-racism

framework. In fact, Essed's work, although used to guide this project's exploration into the experiences of Black police officers, is part of a tradition which owes much to its antecedents. Feagin and Feagin (1978) and Feagin (1991), for example, found that racism continues to impact the lives of middle class Black Americans. They demonstrate how by illustrating that there are variations in the sites and ranges of discriminatory actions. Black people, for example, encounter qualitatively different forms of discrimination in the work place than walking down the street. Feagin and Sikes' (1994) interviews support this earlier work and identify some of the multiple dimensions of racism that can shape the experiences of Black people. They uncover a range of discriminatory acts such as avoidance, exclusion/rejection, verbal and physical attacks, insults and subtle insensitivities.

Additionally, much antecedent research supports the notion that racism occurs in various forms. Feagin and Feagin's (1978) examination of racial and ethnic relations as well as Benokraitis's and Feagin's (1986) examination of gender both posit that intentional, visible and easily documented acts can be labeled as "blatant" forms of discrimination. Less visible, less obvious forms are labeled "subtle," and hidden, purposeful and malicious acts are labeled "covert." Feagin and Sikes similarly conceive of

racism as occurring along blatant, subtle, and covert dimensions arguing, that, "modern racism does not consist mainly of the isolated acts of scattered white bigots, but rather has been inescapable in the everyday worlds of African Americans" (1994:4). Feagin and Vera (1995) further demonstrate that the involvement of White people in racism is complex and varied. They posit that White people can actively be engaged in racist acts, catalyze these acts as acolytes or passively allow these acts to occur with little involvement.

Due to the complexity of racism, researchers conclude that Black people's experiences with and knowledge of racism can offer insight that can further scholarly understanding. Illustrating that knowledge of racism transcends immediate, individual occurrences, St. Jean and Feagin posit that, "past memories flow into present memories as past communities are the basis for present communities" (1998: 34). The collective memory of Black people with racism is, therefore, an important source of knowledge if we agree that, "we experience our present world in a context which is causally connected with past events and objects" (1998: 33).

Feagin and Sikes (1994) further this notion by concluding that Black people understand modern racism as a cumulative lived experience. Black Americans view racism not with detachment but in terms of their own and their

relatives' experiences in past and present encounters with White people. When respondents talked about mistreatment, they described experiences with discrimination as not only very painful and stressful in the immediate situation and aftermath, but also as having a cumulative impact on their lives, their families, and their communities. Feagin and Sikes conclude that, "the sum of the encounters is greater in effect; that individuals share experiences with others to form a collective memory of racism" (1994:16). Furthermore, the repeated experience of racism significantly affects a Black person's behavior and understanding of life. Their life perspective comes to embed a repertoire of responses to hostile and racist acts by White people; they learn to cope and contend with racial mistreatment in a variety of creative ways to somehow maintain their equilibrium.

Feagin (1991), for example, found that Black people's responses to discriminatory actions varied according to their perception of the site in which the act occurred and the form of the act. This is important in light of the work of Allport (1954), which identifies different types of discrimination which Black people must understand and respond to. Feagin and Sikes (1994) further found that Black people actively respond to racism with a variety of strategies for coping including deference to White people, or long moments/hours of evaluating a situation before

coping with racism occurred, and for resistance--including verbal reprimands, sarcasm, physical counter-attacks, and lawsuits. A theme throughout many discussions of coping was the struggle to keep some kind of balance and to contain one's frustrations in searching for the best response. The "cost" of racism to the victim was found to range from the immediate to long-term with Black people experiencing embarrassment, frustration, bitterness, anger, rage, etc. The researchers conclude that racism is not merely incidental, but is, "an energy-consuming, life-consuming experience" (1994: 23).

A review of the literature on policing and the experiential-racism framework yields many possible areas of study and analysis. For this project, four broad questions important to an exploratory study of the impact of race on policing have been gleaned from the literature.

Guiding Questions

The following are the guiding questions for this dissertation:

1. How do Black officers experience and understand the structure and ideology of race in American society? Do they have a distinctive cognition of racism that permits insight into racialized attitudes and practices?

2. Are there specific sites, contexts and/or forms of racism which impact the lives of respondents?
3. Are there differences in the experiences and perceptions of officers and, if so, what factors account for them?
4. What solutions do respondents develop to the racial and other problems they discuss?

CHAPTER TWO DESCRIPTION OF METHODS

Overview of the Study

This purpose of this study is to gain insight into how race relates to policing through an examination of Black police officers' reports about and comprehension of racism in their everyday lives. An examination of how race operates within this particular context furthers the goal of constructing a more enhanced theory of racism by linking the interpretations and experiences of Black people to the structural and ideological determinants of racism in everyday life. In this way the project is similar to Burawoy's (1991) extended case method for (re)constructing theory out of collected data in that it seeks to understand structure of society by examining people's experiences within that structure. Further, this project serves as an application of the work of Essed (1991).

The project consists of (1) an in-depth analysis of 50 face-to-face interviews--48 individual and 1 two-person group--conducted with Black officers in a single southern state. The interviews contain information about the respondents' choice of career, work experiences, personal

life and future expectations and goals; and (2) an analysis of similarities and variations in their perceptions and experiences as well as a determination of the factors that account for these differences.

The interviews were conducted by the primary researcher between 1997 and early 1998. Except for eight officers, three of whom had been retired for some time and five of whom have recently retired, the respondents (84 percent) were currently employed as full-time, sworn officers.

Sample and Description of Subjects

The data collected for this study comes from a non-random but reasonably representative sample of Black police officers. Frazier (1978) makes the argument that to the extent the individual's participation in a group or class reflects its language, standards, traditions, and practices, he or she is representative of it. It was, therefore, decided to use a snowball sampling procedure in this project. Black police officers have developed a series of networks based around organizations such as the Afro-American Police League and the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives. These organizations were contacted and, in turn, provided the names of several contact officers who then helped to create a sampling frame for the project. A list of 78 officers was drawn up, 59 contacted and 50 were ultimately interviewed. They

constitute roughly four percent of the total number of Black officers in the agencies from which I drew.

These 50 officers represent 16 law enforcement agencies in the target state including federal, state, county and city departments. Two (12.5 percent) were very small having less than ten officers. Two other departments (12.5 percent) had approximately 50 officers. Three departments (18.75 percent) had from 100 to 150 officers and the other nine (56.25 percent) had 200 or more officers.

The average number of years of law enforcement experience was approximately 16, with eleven officers (22 percent) having served for ten years or less. Seven officers (14 percent) had worked for more than one agency at some point of their career and seven others (14 percent) began their careers in corrections. Because Black officer organizations initially provided the names of experienced officers of higher rank and the subsequent snowball sampling method which drew from their peers, there were more officers of supervisory and command rank included in the study. While fifteen (30 percent) were patrol officers, eight (16 percent) were detectives, ten (20 percent) were sergeants, and seventeen (34 percent) were of higher rank.

Thirty-eight (76 percent) of the officers were male and twelve (24 percent) were female. The level of education was fairly high for this sample. Only five officers (10 percent)

had earned just a high school diploma and six other officers (12 percent) did not discuss their education. The other 39 officers (78 percent) received degrees beyond high school before or during their career.

Sensitizing Concepts

W.I. Thomas argued that sociologists must understand that "definitions of the situation" shape people's behavior because people act on the basis of the meanings that they attach to social events (in Reynolds, 1987). Herbert Blumer developed a methodology from this understanding of human behavior that included the notion of "sensitizing concepts" which permit sociologists to view humans as fluid and creative, as possessing an indeterminate quality.

Blumer argued that "sensitizing concepts" rest on a sense of what is relevant and give researchers, "a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances" (1969: 148). Reynolds describes these concepts as offering, "suggested social alleyways and avenues along and around which one may look," rather than as, "exact prescriptions of what to see" (1987: 80). Therefore, for this project, four primary sensitizing concepts drawn from the experiential-racism framework generally, and the work of Essed (1991) specifically, will be used to examine the range of perceptions and experiences discussed by the respondents as pertaining to race and racism.

Knowledge

This concept includes how Black people learn to understand race and racism as well as how they evaluate and interpret specific acts as racist or not. A key component of the work of Essed, Feagin and Sikes and other scholars is the notion that those who experience racism have a sophisticated knowledge about the reproduction of racism. Essed (1991), for example, holds that experience includes specific events, but experience can also be seen as the impact of knowledge of general (structural) phenomena on one's definition of reality. Black people use beliefs, opinions and acquired knowledge of racism to interpret experiences in their lives; things that White people have become blind to when interacting with Black people. The relevant point is not only what happens but, "how these practices are interpreted and evaluated in terms of the history Black people have in relation to that particular context and/or particular actors" (Essed, 1991: 62).

Marginalization

On the basis of their knowledge of racism, Black people describe structural, ideological and interpersonal processes they encounter which impact their lives (see, for example, Benjamin, 1991; Feagin and Sikes, 1994; St. Jean and Feagin, 1998). This concept refers to various strategies developed by White people to exclude Black people and make them feel

unwanted and unimportant. These strategies range from ignoring Black people to actively barring them from positions in work or housing, for example. These strategies come to be normal, taken for granted, and therefore, can be engaged in unintentionally.

Problematization

This concept refers to both institutional and ideological strategies of White people which define and treat Black people as people with problems or who cause problems. This process entails imbuing Black people with certain generalizing characteristics which define their beliefs and behavior as problematic. Manifestations generally involve a denigration of a person's personality, culture or biological makeup. Most forms of problematization serve as ideological constructions which legitimize exclusion and repression of Black people (Essed, 1991).

Containment

Finally, often Black people respond to their treatment by White people with a variety of forms of resistance. When the dominant group does not accept dominated group's pursuit of equality, justice, and power, its reaction will be one of suppression (Allport, 1954; Essed, 1991; Feagin and Feagin, 1978; Feagin and Sikes, 1994). Often White people refuse to acknowledge racism and express anger when confronted with examples of racism. Containing strategies are those which

seek to pacify and/or intimidate Black people and maintain the current state of race relations.

The Interview

The interviews took place either in home settings (12 percent) or in officers' offices and/or patrol cars. The choice was left to each officer with the intent of permitting as much familiarity and comfort as possible. The officers were told that the purpose of the interview was to examine the life experiences of Black police officers and that the results would be used for a dissertation. The officers were promised complete anonymity and each willingly participated after giving their informed consent. Despite some initial discomfort, all but two of the officers agreed to their interviews being audio-taped. Each interview was later transcribed verbatim.

The interviews lasted between 50 and 110 minutes. Each respondent provided information about his/her background and how it shaped their choice to pursue a career in law enforcement. Also discussed were relationships with co-workers, supervisors, the agency's administration and the community in which he/she works. Another topic of discussion explored the experiences of the officers outside of the institutional work setting. Finally, the officers examined current problems in policing and offered solutions.

Possible limitations of the study revolve around two issues. First, much debate in sociology has focused on the inability of White researchers to successfully interview Black respondents. Although I am cognizant of this concern, the quality of the interactions during the interviews and the depth of respondents' discussions about sensitive issues seemingly implies that this concern wasn't justified in this study.

Secondly, as most interviews were conducted in police departments, complete privacy wasn't always possible. Other officers would enter the room for a period of time, be in a nearby office or telephone in for information. At times respondents would be discussing sensitive issues (see chapter six on violence, for example) and an interruption would occur that would change the course of the discussion. Older respondents with higher ranks would generally show little concern with these interruptions; however, younger respondents with less security demonstrated far more concern and would often not continue discussions.

In conclusion, rather than being seen as a weakness of the study, these concerns can actually demonstrate its strength. If respondents' discussions were limited by these two issues then the experiences with racism discussed in the following chapters may only be a portion of what respondents actually experience.

Instrument

The interview instrument consisted of approximately 18 guiding questions (appendix A) with an open-ended answer format. The goal was to cover the researcher's topics of interest while permitting the respondents to control the flow and direction of the interview. This further allowed each officer to construct a narrative account of her/his experiences with the criminal justice system and raise issues not contained in the instrument. For example, the issue of race was not brought up by the researcher until a respondent began to discuss the subject. This resulted in one respondent never addressing the issue of race which he, apparently, considered of limited importance in his career.

Because experiences with racism is a delicate and serious issue, it was important to give respondents enough space to qualify their statements and to be elaborate in their explanations. The interviews further simulated a "natural" conversation to allow respondents to conceptualize and share their experiences. Fontana and Frey argue that this type of conversational interviewing makes the interview more honest, morally sound, and reliable, because it treats the respondent as an equal, allows him or her to express personal feelings, and therefore presents a more realistic picture than can be uncovered using traditional interview methods" (in Denzin, 1994: 371).

Analysis of Respondent Narratives

Fetterman argues that ethnographers must select quotations that are typical or characteristic of the situation or event described to extrapolate the values and world-view of the speaker from these passages (1989). Similarly, the goal this analysis was to look for patterns of thought and behavior, as illustrated by quotations, and then compare the observations with the sensitizing concepts until themes or patterns emerged. Descriptions of events and social situations such as settings, agents of racism, observers of racism, acts, and attitudes were identified. Of further importance was evidence of a knowledge of racism and the evaluative and comparative processes by which respondents come to understand a particular encounter as racist or not.

To meet the standards of internal validity, the respondents' narratives were analyzed for internal coherence and contradictions. Further, the narratives were compared to each other, and in context with information of the state's broader social history. A further, important construction of validity in this research project involved relating the respondents' shared interpretations to the sensitizing concepts. This permitted a determination of whether the officers' constructions of reality are, in fact, related to the concepts and theoretical assumptions developed in

parallel research with other groups of Black people in different communities.

Observations from narratives were sought, not because they were identical, but because they were consistent with respect to the particular features of interest to this project. To transcend individual perceptions, the analysis centered on shared interpretations, based on comparative analysis of questions such as: (1) Are similar acts in similar situations interpreted in the same way?; and (2) Do respondents use similar arguments? No form of racism will be discussed in this report unless at least ten percent of the respondents discussed it.

As an exploratory examination of policing using an experiential-racism framework to examine the experiences and perceptions of Black system agents, this project and its findings should be subject to further study through appropriate research techniques, either qualitative or quantitative. Further, although many antecedent and parallel works exist supporting the findings of this project, other projects could focus on the validity of these concepts and findings by examining Black people in other occupational settings.

Summary

The respondents' knowledge and understanding of the nature of racism in policing will derive from a thematic

analysis of discussions of their perceptions and experiences. An effort will be made to identify reasons for variations among respondents' perceptions on the basis of structuring factors of racism described by the respondents. Additionally, the findings will be compared to the sensitizing concepts taken from the work of Essed (1991) to see if they are representative of the perceptions and experiences of Black people in general. The following chapters are organized to reflect the internal logic of the sensitizing concepts. Chapter three will examine the knowledge of respondents in order to uncover how they learn about racism and how they think about it. Chapter four will examine barriers to equal participation discussed by respondents. Chapter five will examine ideological processes and the attitudes of White people encountered by respondents which act to define the respondents and Black people in general as problems that must be dealt with. Finally, chapter six will examine respondents' discussions of the repressive and intimidating responses of White people and White institutions to Black people pointing out racism and/or working for changes in existing racial relations.

It is hoped that this examination will contribute to emerging trends in criminology by (1) employing qualitative methods of research; which (2) allow flexible definitions of concepts such as race and racism to be used; (3) to guide an

examination involving the maximum input of respondents in defining their interpretation of reality; (4) to reconstruct theories which permit a greater understanding of persistent racism as well as the development of possible remedies.

CHAPTER THREE
GENERAL KNOWLEDGE of RACISM:
ACQUISITION, COMPREHENSION, and STRUCTURING FACTORS
ANALYSIS of DATA (PART I)

Introduction

You process information based on your experiences, your education, what you've been exposed to. And if you hadn't been exposed to certain kinds of things, you're going to process information a little bit differently. If you have cultural beliefs, philosophical beliefs that have been ingrained in you for years by your parents, your neighbors, your associations, your school, your friends, your whole socialization process--that makes you who you are and who you are determines how you make decisions and process information. The same with me. (21)

This chapter examines respondents' knowledge of current racism. My earlier discussion illustrated that a key component of the experiential-racism framework is the notion that those who experience racism often have a sophisticated knowledge about the reproduction of racism. Any inquiry into this topic must, therefore, assume that without general knowledge of racism individuals cannot comprehend the meaning of racism in their lives. Respondents' knowledge will be examined in three distinct but interrelated forms: the acquisition of knowledge--beginning with the effect on older officers of growing up under legal segregation and

continuing with an examination of those contexts identified by both older and younger respondents as being essential to their acquisition of knowledge about race and racism; the comprehension of specific encounters with racism; and an understanding of the general structure of racism.

The conversations suggest that, in fact, Black people use an acquired knowledge of racism to interpret experiences in their lives. Respondents detail various sources of this knowledge and suggest that it is collectively shared within communities of Black people. They also demonstrate the cumulative impact of racist encounters on their lives. Many respondents illustrate evaluative processes of judging particular events as racist or not. The respondents further demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the dynamic nature of racism in America. Their concentration on the importance of race in their lives indicates that it still plays an important role in shaping policing.

Acquisition of Knowledge of Racism

The conversations with respondents illustrate how, and under which circumstances they acquire knowledge that contributes to their comprehension of racism. This section will show how, and within what contexts, Black officers develop a general knowledge of racism, most of the older officers within an officially segregated social environment and most of the younger officers within continuing contexts

of unofficial racial separation. Further, this section will show how respondents develop a specialized knowledge of the operation of racism in policing.

Life Under Segregation

America is, historically, a segregated society. From the centuries of the enslavement of people of African descent to the decades following reconstruction, Black and White people have been separated by both institutional and ideological forces. Andrew Hacker, in describing what he sees as two distinct nations, argues that racial separation, "as a social and human division, . . . surpasses all others--even gender--in intensity and subordination" (1992: 4). In this study, forty officers (80 percent) grew up under officially segregated conditions, for at least some part of their lives, and thirty-four of those forty (85 percent) describe the cumulative effect it has on shaping how they see themselves in relation to the social world:

Well we, the Black race, especially my age group, born in the fifties, sixties, forties, we know how it is to be denied, how it is not to be accepted, and to know how to struggle and that, whatever you get, you have to take it . . . you have to earn it, you have to make a way in life for yourself.(6)

Living in a world of limited opportunities and facing the hostility of a more powerful group forced Black people to form a collective identification; a sense of solidarity. Most respondents spoke in terms of "we" throughout their

discussions. They speak of how they learn to survive from day to day in the face of often hostile opposition and they further learn that success depends upon perseverance and strength of will.

All major American social institutions have been involved in maintaining a status quo in which Black people are usually relegated to secondary status. As noted earlier, however, the role of the police has been particularly important in perpetuating racial segregation. Twenty-two officers (44 percent) discuss experiences with the police while growing up that contributed to their understanding of their place in America and, in particular, the relationship between Black people and the criminal justice system:

I was, must have been like 12, 13, and I'm trying to play recreational football, so I came out of the theater and I said to myself, "I'm gonna see if I can just jog home," if I had the endurance to do it. I got down to right where the old [TV station] used to be, I said, "Gees, I'm not even tired." I was on the last stretch so I picked it up and I really started to sprint when a cop come up behind me, (SIREN), pulled over and said, "Get up against the wall, get up against the wall!" The guy says, "What are you running for, what are you running for?" I told him, I said, "Just running, you know, felt like running." I forget all what he said to me. (27)

Black children learned early that even the normal activities of children, such as running and playing, were responded to differently depending on race. They began a process of understanding that the police played an important role in judging and controlling lives in Black communities.

One officer responded that, "it just seems like in our neighborhoods they was always taking somebody to jail. They weren't there to do any good, or what I would call good"(1). Members of Black communities learned to fear police and to be careful in their presence. Another respondents remembers, "children would cry out, 'run, the police are coming,' I mean, because they felt that they were going to get beat up and attacked and stuff like that" (15).

Despite this shared understanding, in the face of employment restrictions, policing was often the best job available to Black men. In the early to mid-1900s, some were hired to keep order in Black communities. Around 1970, as discussed previously, there was a general push to hire Black officers and, as Alex (1969) maintained, the economic possibilities of this career choice often outweighed the negative experiences and connotations Black people associated with policing. Forty-five of the respondents (90 percent), including both those respondents who grew up under official segregation and those who did not, discuss in some manner the importance of salary and benefits in their decision to join and to continue policing. One officer discussed the dilemma he faced:

After the military, I became married and had a little one and the jobs that were available for a Black man in the early mid 70's were manual jobs and menial jobs and when the job offer of police first came about with the city, they were paying

like \$10,500 and I was making probably around \$4,000 and I went over there. (29)

Continuing segregation in the workplace forced Black people to survive by looking to the best options available, even if it meant working in a traditionally oppressive institution. However, the increased salary and authority granted these officers still was not enough to overcome persistent White desires for the maintenance of the status quo. Opposition was encountered both at work and in the community and had a powerful effect on shaping these officers' comprehension of race. A female detective, in describing the lessons she learned from the pressure and stress experienced by her father recounted that:

My father was the first Black officer in [our town] . . . I was not raised to be a racist. Growing up I do remember a cross being burned in my yard and my father moved me and my sisters and brothers and my mother out of the house for a while; we stayed with my grandmother. (23)

Encounters with police and the terrorists acts of racist groups is described by respondents as having a cumulative impact which shapes their self-images, their daily lives and their careers. This mirrors findings of earlier research (for example, Feagin and Sikes, 1994) which illustrates how past experiences with racism continually impacts the lives of the victims--the cumulative impact of racism--as well as the lives of other Black people who know

the victims--the collective impact of racism--beyond the initial racist encounter.

Family

The disruption of family life by racist acts serves to foster an atmosphere of learning, of sharing information about the world and the family's place in that world. Thirty-two officers (64 percent) discuss how the family serves as an important definer and interpreter of acts and events. As one officer recounted, this interpretation often occurred in conjunction with positive messages meant to develop his sense of worth:

Although things were segregated downtown I never really paid it a whole lot of attention because of my mother. We went downtown shopping and you said you had to go the bathroom, mom said, "okay let's go home." And she put you in the car and she took you home. I never used a colored bathroom, okay? You know that type of thing. And if there was a lunch counter there and people were sitting down eating and you said, "Mom, I'm hungry." She said, "Okay, let's go home." Put you in the car and you go home and you eat. My parents kind of stressed the importance of self-esteem. You know, you're not second to anybody. You're not less intelligent than anybody. Just, do the right thing. Always respect other people and they'll respect you. (9)

Respondents illustrate that, despite the hatred encountered, their families taught them a two part lesson: self-worth and to not hate those who hate you. Many officers stress that their parents did not teach racism and racial hatred of White people. Rather, they were taught how to interpret events and deal with White people in ways that

would minimize the potential serious~~ness~~ of encounters. One officer remembers being pulled over while driving through a rural area:

Well, I had relatives, uncles and stuff who, you know, who I would listen to, and they would tell me about, "hey when you be out getting older, watch this, these types of things happen. You know, you have to be careful." So at the time, I was very careful and cool, I listened to the officer and yes sir and what have you, and he took my license, and I said, "sir, I'll pick up the money and bring it right back here." And of course, I didn't. (35)

Surviving in an overtly segregated society meant that Black people had to learn their lessons well and share that knowledge with others. Despite the changes that have occurred since the 1960s to reduce legislated separation, Black people still must help each other understand how it operates. One of the youngest respondents, in spite of his desire to think of race relations as having improved, detailed with great consternation a conversation that he had to have with his daughter once she became older and began to ask about the things she noted about Black and White children:

You got this little Black kid and this little White kid and they play together and as they get older that interaction becomes more involved. The Black child can't go visit the White child and the White child can't go visit the Black child...and when they asked, the parents tell them, "well I don't want you hanging around those Blacks," and they tell the Black kid, "those White people are prejudiced and I don't want you around them." So, now you've created a rift. Being that they're kids they're not gonna look at it that way. They don't

understand it that way, but they should. So what they do is they still try to hang out with each other, but the older they get, the more and more the way things are set up separate them more. And it gets to the point where now they're angry at each other and they don't understand why... and you have problems and that's when you get those confrontations and, "you think you better than me." So that's the way I try to explain it to my daughter. I tell her . . . the reason why is because I think that we create our enemy. (12)

Continuing racial separation and isolation make it easy to (re)produce ideological notions of racial difference and perpetuate notions of who the "enemy" is.

Social Struggle

Social institutions set up to maintain racial separation have not been easily changed and people grow up encountering barriers and understanding White people as adversarial. Thirteen Black officers (26 percent) noted the importance of struggle, of fighting for equality in the face of opposition. Statements such as, "I'm a product of the sixties demonstrations . . . and got arrested doing civil rights demonstrations" (9) were enunciated with pride. Many officers either quoted from or paraphrased the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. while explaining their understanding of the world, and often, officers decorate their offices with objects that demonstrate pride in Black people's struggles and successes. However, it would be an error to think of social struggle as only a past process that contributed to respondents' current knowledge of

racism. Many officers discuss past struggle in relation to ongoing, current struggles and the need for future struggle:

I'm talking about the glimpse of what we may have seen, whether it was genuine or not, in the million man march. There has to be a reckoning and a willingness of a group of people to be willing to take some bold steps to make some bold changes. And you know being a product of the 60's and 70's myself, being ground in the embers of strife and unrest, Black people came together because they had to, they had to, they had to, now they need to come together because they have to. They really do. And we are doing some things that are re-instilling and, I know the values will never be the same because we are constantly changing and moving and evolving, but re-instilling some of those fundamental things that are necessary to work on the conscious of a group of people. It has to happen, it has to happen.(10)

This response shows how participation in an unfolding struggle is educational. Knowledge is acquired through struggle because involvement provides an atmosphere in which people learn about the social world, the forces that impact their lives and their ability to change conditions they encounter. Respondents illustrate that their conceptions of the present and future, as well as their perceptions of solutions to social problems, are firmly rooted in their understanding of how problems were faced in the past.

Community and Community Organizations

Struggle to change the social world is not undertaken by individuals living and working in isolation. Respondents demonstrate that strategies of social change are shared and collective. Importantly, working to address the injustices

of current race relations is a crucial source of knowledge about the operation of racism. Participants in the effort to change rely on each other for information, ideas, strength and mutual support:

I chose a career in law enforcement at the urging and request of the NAACP because we did not have a Black officer in the department at that time. When they threatened to terminate me on trumped up charges, I always had me a lawyer. When they used to do that I would go to the NAACP and I would say what is the problem. The NAACP and the community were 100 percent behind me. (38)

Fourteen respondents (28 percent) echoing the findings of Button's (1989) research in southern communities discuss how Black organizations representing the community actively recruited them to become officers as a strategy of social change and stood by them in the face of overt hostility. This relationship permitted the respondents' to acquire a sophisticated knowledge of racism in American society through continual interaction with people intimately involved in working to correct racial injustices through collective action. Respondents owed their jobs, in large part, to the support of Black organizations and the communities they policed:

My law enforcement generation was from the middle 60s to mid 70s, the civil rights. We were civil rights officers, if it had not been for civil rights, then probably I wouldn't have been hired. We were like the trend setters. (44)

Respondents describe how they feel an important sense of responsibility to the Black community because of this

trust and support. However, the respondents were clear that their relationship with the Black public in general was not always a positive one. Thirty-eight respondents (76 percent) discussed an often adversarial relationship with members of the Black public in which Black officers are, "viewed almost like the enemy" (1).

The relationship between Black Officers and Black people in general has been a topic of interest to those examining the relationship of race to policing. Earlier interviews with officers (Alex, 1969; Leinen, 1984) discussed an adversarial relationship with Black officers being labeled as traitors, for example. Quantitatively driven studies produced contradictory findings on the acceptance of Black officers by the Black public. The conclusion implied, in many instances, that a Black v. Black adversarial relationship was evidence that the police occupational role was more determinate than race in explaining police behavior and community attitudes towards officers.

However, respondents' discussions show the complexity of the relationship. If Black people are engaged in a continual process of acquiring and sharing information, and given the historical relationship that required legitimized police force in Black communities, this adversarial relationship provides strong evidence of the process of

knowledge acquisition and sharing. The meaning of policing and how to interact with police in order to increase survival and minimize problems in day to day life became an important part of the general body of knowledge of racism:

Well, in my community Blacks don't want to interact with you because you're a cop. Well, Blacks have had bad experiences all their life. Blacks from my generation have had to run from the police. They were beaten up badly, some were killed, shot and, and they just had bad experiences. So, when I did become a cop I can see them telling their kids to stay away from cops. They're no good, they're no good. Because of their bad, negative experiences they've had. I can understand why. I can understand why. But, ugh, that's not a good feeling to have when people to want to just pull away from you. (39)

Despite the personal affront to their self-images, most respondents explain and defend this behavior. Only four of the respondents (8 percent) described this as Black racism, and they were all younger--probably illustrating how a general knowledge of racism is related to age and the extent of experiences with racism. Older Black officers, who have experienced legal segregation first-hand, often concentrate on how past oppression influences present relations, thereby providing them a base of knowledge about the continuing hostility of the Black public for police.

Further, respondents illustrate that, because Black and police have always been thought of and learned as being diametrical opposites, Black citizens often prefer to be helped by a White officer rather than a Black officer

because of the impression that the Black officer is a traitor to the Black people that should not be trusted:

Black police officers met less acceptance than White police officers because of how the people felt. They felt that the Blacks were sell-outs and I've been called a sell-outs by Blacks, I've been called "Niggers" by Blacks, "Uncle Toms" by Blacks, I've been called anything that you can be called. We were viewed by other Blacks as being used against Blacks, as not giving fellow Blacks the benefit of the doubt. In many instances they felt that Blacks who were police officers were Blacks who were hired to be more oppressive of Blacks. Even to this day a lot of Blacks still accuse police officers, Black police officers of being programmed, instruments of White authority.
(26)

These discussions provide evidence that the Black publics' hostility to Black officers should not be dismissed as Black racism or used as evidence that Black people react negatively merely to the police occupational role. Black community organizations, for example, have pushed hard for the inclusion of Black officers, supported them and built strong relations with them. Therefore, Black officers who police communities in which they grew up, often encounter higher levels of acceptance and less hostility. However, the cumulative, shared knowledge that police oppress Black people is so strong that Black people who encounter Black officers that they are not personally familiar with, react strongly, as if unable to unravel the perceived contradiction inherent in a Black person being a police officer. These encounters are often hostile and include

derogatory name calling which is an affront to the officers' self images.

Religion

Religion has been demonstrated as being pivotal in the lives of many Black Americans, promoting understanding as well as a sense of solidarity and righteousness in the midst of struggle. Genovese illustrated how religion emerged as, "African slaves most formidable weapon for resisting slavery's moral and psychological aggression" (1976: 659). This "weapon" remains formidable as illustrated by the role of Black religious institutions in the Civil Rights movement of the mid-twentieth century. In this project, fourteen respondents (28 percent) discuss various ways in which religion contributes to their knowledge of racism. First, the message taught in Black churches provides officers with a will, a desire, to persevere in the face of continuing racism:

You gotta be strong. You had to be real strong, real strong. And again I think with prayer and, and, ugh you know a lot of times I hate to come to work the next day because the next day would be worse. Everyday would be worse. Well, I guess by, with prayer, support from my family and support from the community I hung in there. (39)

Officers frequently discuss how the message of their religious faith helps them to understand and survive. Other officers discuss how the structure of religion in America serves as a rich source of knowledge about racism. For

example, respondents note how, in contrast to messages of love and brotherhood, religion is a very segregated institution which serves to perpetuate and reinforce racial divisions:

Oh, [Black and White people are] quite different and . . . in numerous situations, quite segregated, probably the most predominate barometer will be on Sundays when you look up and you see who's at your church. They're still predominately, and although there are a lot of Blacks that live in upper middle income, White, predominantly White neighborhoods, they go back to the Black churches on Sundays. (29)

It is important to note how changes in one societal context, such as housing in this respondent's comments, is recognized as not automatically signifying changes in other societal contexts, such as religion in this discussion. Respondents illustrate the complex durability of racism as an important factor in America despite changes in the nature of racism within specific institutions and contexts.

Education

This process was recognized as occurring in education as well. Although twenty-six (52 percent) discuss their educational achievement as being a source of tremendous pride and desegregation of schools as potentially advancing racial equality, nine (18 percent) discuss how it furthered their knowledge of racism. Most respondents, having grown up with segregation, experienced education as perpetuating and recreating racism in their day to day lives:

We know that every African American did not have the opportunities, I mean, in my short time here I can remember a time when we didn't get the new books in school and that's in my lifetime. You know, when we look at racism in this country, we're not talking about some deep, dark thing that happened 2 and 3 hundred, 4 hundred years ago. And we know that African Americans did not have the same opportunities education-wise as some other folks.(14)

While recognizing how educational opportunities were limited for them, respondents understand education as a chance for personal advancement and social change. However, the process of change has been full of conflict. Respondents discuss their feelings upon entering traditionally all White schools, the reactions of students, staff and teachers and how these influenced their understanding of racism. One respondent describes the hostile reaction of a professor, "I remember in college a professor looked at me and said, 'This is a school for Whites, what are you doing here'" (35).

Beyond providing a rich source of experiences by which to hone an understanding of racism, educational settings provided respondents access to Black educators whose styles of teaching and messages about race relations were crucial in helping respondents to understand their experiences:

Black people understand other Black people. I've taken a couple of classes years ago, I'll never forget this [Black professor]. I took the psychology of African Americans and that class really helped me understand a lot. It's like if you're not from a certain area, you did not grow up a certain way, a lot of times people don't understand other people's language.(22)

Employment

The respondents illustrate how the structural and ideological conditions of their youth and the struggle to change these conditions provided a framework within which they developed an understanding of racism. The family, the community, the church and educational settings were all important socializers. These findings are consistent with the work of scholars in the experiential-racism framework.

However, because this project centers on one occupation, it is not surprising that respondents discuss the variety of ways that their occupational setting serves to provide them with a specialized knowledge of racism within policing. This finding illustrates the continual process of learning which shapes people well beyond childhood as well as methods of learning used to gather necessary information about new settings. Forty officers (80 percent) discuss their relationships with other Black officers as being crucial to their acquisition of knowledge. This process included looking to, empathizing with and understanding the experiences of others. One officer describes another officer's experience that, vicariously, became an essential part of his understanding of racism:

[I knew] the first Black officer that was allowed a walking beat downtown before the city had traffic enforcement. While he was walking downtown, this guy, a White man, walked behind him everyday all day long while he was on his beat, 10 to 6, with a big sign, "There's No Nigger Police

Downtown." He had to endure that now, and the guy had a right to carry the sign, so . . . Can you imagine trying to protect the public when everywhere you go there's a guy that's got a big sign walking behind you saying, "No Nigger Police Downtown"? He endured that, man, had to do that, but I knew he was a strong character.(15)

Because of high levels of White officer hostility, experienced Black officers became teachers for newer, less experienced Black officers, providing them with essential information about the requirements and expectations of the police occupation:

He tried to, you know, wise me to some things, he made me knowledgeable or aware of certain things as to look for as far as on the street and internally in the building, you know, he was a very sharp officer.(31)

Further, illustrating the importance of collective memory (see, for example, Feagin and Sikes, 1994) they provided a network of emotional support, were teachers of the operation of race in policing, and the promoters of strategies of resistance:

When I came to the police department there were a couple of older guys, who are both now retired that I worked very directly with, and they taught me about the system, how that system worked. I listened to those guys. So, I got a lot of background information. They told me a lot of things like someone said, "hey you know, you've got a college education. You don't have to take this." And that's what they kept saying. And what I heard in their voices was, "we came here, we were the first ones." I'm talking about guys that were the first Black police officers. You know, they were getting ready to go out when I came on. And they were saying, "hey, we took all this stuff so you wouldn't have to take it." And that stuck with me. So, I fought that the guys and girls who

are out there today don't have to do the same fighting I did.(35)

Although respondents rely on an acquired knowledge of the general nature of racism, information about the operation of racism within this specific institutional setting requires a more specialized knowledge of racism. As one officer put it, "You feel it's wrong, but that goes back to what I was saying earlier, when it is institutionalized racism, you really don't know exactly how to look at it, because you've never experienced it like that" (16). Other Black officers serve, therefore, as important teachers.

The limited number of Black officers and the closed nature of their occupational setting illustrates another aspect of the learning process. While Essed (1991) focuses on the "acquisition" of knowledge, twenty-eight respondents (56 percent) illustrate how acquisition and sharing operate simultaneously in this occupational setting. Officers acquire information and then act on it by educating others. Respondents discuss how they serve as role models and educators for other officers, for young children, family members and how they help willing White officers understand Black people.

In describing his responsibility to younger officers, one respondent describes how, "I would basically tell him some pitfalls that he would have to look out for. You know some hidden racism. I would tell him to prepare himself, get

ready to be disappointed and just give it the best shot"(39). Beyond one on one relationships with individual Black officers, respondents discuss how they have developed supportive networks. These networks can be loose affiliations of groups of officers within the same agency and/or from different agencies, or they can be formal associations of officers across agencies, the region or nation. These networks help officers share knowledge and are mechanisms through which they help each other to adapt, and succeed:

We encouraged each other to continue on, and discussed how to proceed under certain situations, gave advice to each other. Met each other for lunch and said, "Do you know what just happened, you won't believe what just happened." So it's good to have a mentor.(17)

Support is important in these situations because respondents often feel that the only ones that can understand them are other Black officers. However, it is also important to note how this mutual reliance serves as a process by which officers can compare experiences, collectively construct an understanding of what they experience and serves as a collective source of fighting racism. As the comment below underscores, this process is important for members of minority groups in hostile environments:

I just had a call the other day from one of our new female agents and it was like, "Well I didn't know what to do and," she was going "I got my

evaluation." I said, "Wait a minute, before you tell me anything, let me tell you. The evaluation was low because you're a new agent and you can't possibly get a high score because that would be different." And she's like, "Yeah, that's exactly what they said." I said, "That's what they tell all female agents." She's like, "Oh no." (41)

Respondents' discussions illustrate how they further acquire knowledge of racism through their interactions with White people. Twelve respondents (24 percent) discuss how the actions of or conversations with White officers help them to better understand racism. First, this can occur by listening to White officers and evaluating their comments in relation to one's own experiences. One officer illustrates:

(We've) got some people that just want to sit down and talk about the good old days. I can not tell you how many times this captain would tell me, "I remember when Blacks lived on that side." Then fifteen minutes later, "you know that was the good old days: Black cops couldn't arrest Whites, ya'll Black cops only had two cars, in order to arrest a White guy ya'll had to call a White cop over." Fifteen minutes later into the conversation, "you know those were the good old days." (25)

This type of conversation provides respondents with historical information about policing during segregation as well as insight into how White and Black people's perception of events is different. Further, the sworn testimony of White officers forced to give information in trials or depositions provides important information. One respondent discusses how testimony allowed her insight into familial socialization, "One of the sergeants that testified at my trial said, his parents didn't like Black folks, and he

can't help it, cause he don't like Black folks. Because of his upbringing" (1). Beyond furthering the respondents' knowledge of racism, these type of comments serve to legitimate respondents' understanding of racism. It is one thing to perceive that they know how and why racism operates in policing and another to hear someone tell them that what they have perceived is, in fact, correct.

Respondents further discuss supportive White officers as an important source of information about racism. Respondents share comments such as, "I've had White guys tell me, the only reason they're [other White police officers] doing this or doing that that way is because the guy is Black" (46). Furthermore, these relationships with the emotional support and knowledge that they provide are often essential to respondents' abilities to survive in this hostile environment.

The struggle against racism has promoted a range of strategies to combat it. In policing, for example, one such strategy is diversity training. Although training's effectiveness is still a matter of debate, eight (16 percent) of the respondents illustrated how it is a good source of knowledge. One officer who eventually became a trainer describes interactions in normal classes:

They shared some of the things that they were taught in growing up that created a lot of tension and I kept seeing that in all of the classes all of the concerns in each group, it would come up

again with every class, so I knew that it wasn't an isolated opinion. They're always reluctant until someone says that key word, pushes that particular button and then that one person explodes and then it allows everyone else to get involved. There's always a particular word or phrase that will do that in every class. It varies. Sometimes it's females in law enforcement. Sometimes it's profiling African American motorists. Sometimes it's why are Caucasian males being blamed all the time and made out to be the bad guy. (42)

These classes provide information about learning processes, stereotypes, and ways in which race and racism operate in policing. Sitting down with other officers in interactive settings designed to elicit emotional responses is described as a good way to gain knowledge about why racism persists:

Me personally, I'd always lived that way. So it was nothing new to me. But then I saw the attitudes of most of the other people that were there, and I thought, my God, I thought that ended a long time ago. Do they really think this way? Things almost came to fistcuffs in these classrooms. It gets heated because you have a mixture, male, female, sometimes homosexuals--people just cannot accept the fact that there are differences, cannot do it. And I don't know, it's kind of hard for a lot of people. The more you attend these classes and are able to talk with these people, you realize that it's something that they've learned, they've been taught. You know, you wasn't born that way. Someone taught you all this, and it's your environment which you become accustomed to. (46)

Finally, the occupational setting provides knowledge of racism through officers access to guiding rules and regulations designed to manage race relations. For example, EEOC standards and general guidelines refer to minority

group treatment and thus provide a body of knowledge about racism from which officers draw. Further, suits and complaints that are affirmed legitimize respondents' understanding of racism. One officer sums it up well describing that when he, "filed an EOC complaint against the city in 1979 on the basis of discrimination and promotions for sergeant, the EOC did an investigation and, and their judgment affirmed that discrimination did exist" (26).

Twenty-two officers (44 percent) discuss the importance of EEOC guidelines in shaping their knowledge of race relations within policing. Five officers (10 percent) used these guidelines as a base on which to conduct further research into race relations in their department and the treatment of minority group officers. Twelve officers (24 percent) discuss their participation in successful lawsuits and how that affirmed their understanding of policing and furthered their faith in their accumulated knowledge of racism. "Oh, rampant discrimination. From the EEOC complaint that we filed in '84, they came back in '88 with a determination that Blacks had been discriminated against in hiring, training, and promotions" (3).

Media

Literature on the socializing effects of television often focuses on the power of the media to shape attitudes and behavior of children. However, respondents in this study

only discuss the media as a reference point which most use to reflect upon experiences they have had as officers/adults. Seventeen respondents (34 percent) discuss their knowledge of racism in the criminal justice system using examples such as portrayals of Black officers on TV and in the movies, the O.J. Simpson case, infamous cases of violence involving police, and one officer discussed a documentary on cultural diversity training. All, however, in one way or another discuss how the media constructs and perpetuates stereotypes of Black men as criminals. One officer summed up the media's impact:

See a car, three White males ride by, we don't think nothing of it. See three Black males ride by, you got to look a little harder. Sure. I think that you bring that with you because you look at TV, everything's telling you they're bad. They're bad, they're bad. Everything's telling you they're bad, so of course you look harder, you know any of them could be bad. It doesn't matter. But the perception is, you know, if you see three of them in a car, they look like a gang. Let's face it, you're walking down a street and five little White boys walk by, you probably wouldn't think nothing of it. Now let the same five Black boys walk by. You do think for a minute, and Black people do the exact same thing. The exact same thing. And it's funny, we should know better, but the perception.
(8)

Another officer illustrates that it is not just merely a process of passively absorbing information. His discussion shows that, despite the media's power, respondents evaluate what they see in relation to their experiences and the general knowledge they possess:

It depends on how badly you want to hold on to what you believe in, it can impact you. For instance, I remember seeing a television show where they had these cops, I think it was in Houston, and these particular White cops were talking about, they had come from places like, I think Oregon, and places like there with very few Blacks. They had no experiences with Blacks and the guy said, "When I came to Houston, I wasn't a racist, I didn't dislike Black people and stuff, but now I work in this predominantly poor Black area and everything I come in contact is pimps and druggies and thieves and all this kind of stuff, and I had this different image of Black people." Okay, and everybody says, "Yeah, I can understand that." I didn't, because what about all those Black officers he worked with at the police department? Are they druggies, pimps and thieves? (27)

The media, therefore, is considered an important source of knowledge about racism as long as it is used critically in relation to one's experiences with racism. Respondents demonstrate the complex ways this knowledge is used to evaluate and determine the nature of an event or interaction. This final respondent, for example, uses prior knowledge of racism to evaluate the utility of information contained in the media.

In summary, institutional and ideological processes set the framework in which Black Americans learn what it means to live in America, what to expect from others and what is expected of them if they are to survive and grow. An important body of information which Black people learn, thus, revolves around racism. Learning occurs experientially and in interaction with others. It is individually

cumulative as well as a collectively shared process. As institutional settings change, Black people use not only the messages and meanings that they have learned, not only the support networks they have developed, but importantly, an interpretive framework--a methodology--of how to evaluate and decide the meaning of particular messages or acts they encounter.

Comprehension Of Racist Encounters

After so many years of overt racism and then watching the change over years from those overt acts to covert acts, I can, and a lot of African Americans have developed an ability to pick up on certain things. I mean, you can pretty much meet someone within two or three minutes and know if they're sincere and it's wrong, you can say, "well that's prejudice and you're prejudging someone," but the truth is the truth. After you've been treated a particular way so long and heard so many things, pretty soon, they come around full circle and you know what certain phrases mean, you know what certain mannerisms mean because you've seen it thousands of times before and you've seen what it's attached to, so. (42)

The comprehension of racist encounters refers to officers' ability to explain specific experiences in terms of both a general and a specialized knowledge of racism drawn from hundreds of encounters with racism over their lifetimes. The above comment closely parallels findings by Feagin and Sikes (1994) who conclude that Black people develop a "second sight" or an "antennae" which alerts them to racism. This section will briefly illustrate respondents' strategies of interpretation, evaluation, argumentation,

Without going into a lot of detail, this section will provide examples of how officers systematically test specific definitions of situations based on a set of criteria that allows for an evaluation of events as racist or not. The conversations show the importance of race in the officers' daily lives and how they have developed creative ways of understanding the role race plays in an event or interaction.

Interpretation

Respondents almost unanimously agree that, because of their usually extensive experience, they have a greater insight into race relations than their White counterparts and are therefore better equipped to make interpretations about events:

I really believe that African-Americans, because we have always been on the receiving end of a lot of that stuff, that we really have a deeper level of understanding and compassion for other people. I really think it's difficult for Whites today to really see even the subtle vestiges of discrimination and prejudices. I'm just saying that I think Whites by and large have real difficulty, really being able to perceive and understand people who have to walk through that stuff, day after day after day. And in some kind of way you don't get a dose of that or a shot of that. (10)

Another officer agreed stating, "I know what it is to be poor, I know what it is to be oppressed and I know what it is to have a sense of hopelessness" (29). Experiences with oppression provide a learning framework which respondents

maintain give them an ability to interpret the extent of racism in messages and encounters. These experiences also allow them to develop an evaluative ability.

Evaluation

As discovered by Essed (1991) and Feagin and Sikes (1994), respondents demonstrate that, rather than jumping to conclusions and assuming that every slight involves an element of racism, they possess rules of inference and comparison which allow explanatory evaluation. The first example illustrates how one Black officer came to the respondent, who had more experience, for advice and, in turn, the respondent talked to other officers involved to get their side of the story:

[When] you have an officer that feels like maybe they weren't evaluated properly or an officer that feels like they are being disciplined because of their race whereas another White officer wouldn't receive that discipline or the same level of discipline, they may be concerned about that so they may approach you and ask about it. And so, I have no problems with going up, speaking with the people I need to speak with and inquiring about it. I like to use race as the last thing, you know, typically I don't like to cry wolf, I very rarely introduce race into any situation. I eliminate all other factors and then the last thing that's there is race, then it's introduced.
(19)

This comment illustrates both the role of mutual support among Black officers and how respondents prefer to eliminate all other possibilities before deciding the role that race played in an encounter. Similarly, many

respondents demonstrate how they originally consider race as a factor in an encounter, but later, after evaluating all factors, conclude that the encounter is not racist, but as occurring for other reasons.

Further, as Feagin and Sikes (1994) discovered, respondents in this project also illustrate how evaluating an event is related to the process of deciding an appropriate response:

If you perceive you've been threatened in some manner its better to deal with it right then. If you're so angry that all you can see is red, which I done that before-there have been times when some people just push my buttons, and I just walk away, and I calm down and I think about it and I think about all the reasons why this happened and I try to develop some course of action to deal with it in a professional, peaceful manner. I don't think very good when I'm angry and I may not be very rational. (21)

In a normally conflictual environment where respondents generally lack power and can be seen as outsiders, it is necessary to be firm in demanding appropriate treatment, but, at the same time, it is important to be calm and analytical enough to evaluate the reasons behind an event. This officer illustrates how maintaining calm furthers the ability to reason and evaluate.

Another respondent illustrates a process of empathy, of placing himself in the position of another to evaluate their actions:

My partner had bought this Harley Davidson motorcycle. So we meet this sergeant and we're

talking, just a routine conversation about it, and the sergeant says, "Hey, I understand you bought yourself a motorcycle . . . are you gonna let [him] Nigger it up for you?" Now he's my immediate supervisor, so it took me a moment to process what he had said. My partner got real quiet 'cause he expected me to explode. "What's his purpose for saying that," that's what I'm processing in my mind. So he didn't say anything and the sergeant didn't say anything and I didn't say anything and then he said something else and we went on with the conversation. I'm assuming, you know, that that type of conversation was common with him and that he was saying something to see if I would explode, to see if I would react to it so that he could either tell me, "I just said that to see how you would react. If a member of the public said something like that to you I would correct you and counsel you," and this other kind of stuff. So for him, he couldn't lose making that comment. He either was testing me to see if I was going to just go crazy in the restaurant because he said that or he does have a problem and he got off on the fact that as a supervisor he could say that.
(26)

This conversation further illustrates the differing reactions of Black and White officers. The White officer, not used to accepting overt insults, assumed that the Black officer would explode and unleash his fury upon the White sergeant. However, the unique position of the Black officer required patience, evaluation and a decision on an appropriate response. It was clearly not the first time he had been baited by a White person and so his response was measured. The respondent later added that only through an increased frequency of interactions with this sergeant was he able to finally determine that this sergeant was, in

fact, racially motivated and not merely a superior testing the responses of his officers.

This is an important point in illustrating how respondents process information for extended periods of time, share with others and make determinations once all the necessary evidence is in hand. Another respondent discusses this process by detailing how he and his wife attempted to discover why Black people were treated badly at malls:

Me and my wife have had a lot of discussions about it and I attribute a lot of that to the way a person, an African American, is dressed. I've observed it, I've experimented with it and I've found it to be true and I've shared it with my wife and she's tested it. You go into a mall or a store in sweat pants and T-shirts, you're gonna be treated with a lot less respect and attention and probably suspected of being, you know, the proverbial poor welfare person looking to shoplift something. And if you go in dress slacks, a nice dress or shirt, golf shirt or something with a collar on it, things of that nature, I've experienced a lot different treatment and so if I'm going to the mall, I'll get dressed and put on something nice and people are gonna say, "Okay, well this one here, he's not in here to shoplift, he's probably serious about buying something because of the way he's dressed." (4)

This process of sharing information, deciding on an appropriate experiment, carrying it out, discussing the results and then using the information to guide future behavior is enlightening. It illustrates how relatively simple aspects of daily life, such as shopping, are matters of concern for Black people. It further illustrates how sophisticated processes of evaluation are collectively

developed and carried out. Finally, it illustrates how Black people are able to make decisions about the relationship between race and other structuring factors, such as appearance in this example, and further their general knowledge of racism (see, for example, Feagin and Sikes, 1994).

Argumentation

Respondents offer references in support of explanatory evaluations through comparisons of consistency, inconsistency and consensus. Conversations contain references to other personal experiences in similar situations and the experiences of other Black people in similar situations:

How do you know its race? If you do a good job, and your evaluations are good. If they begin to nit-pick and bother you. Break it down and when you can't identify anything else--its race. It is racism, not education, not class. Look at (a former officer), he couldn't advance here, he was told that he couldn't handle responsibility. Now he is a US Marshal.(35)

Respondents also offer comparisons to past practices. In the following comment, the respondent argues that his agency was historically racist by showing how his actions have impacted current institutional practices and the behavior of White people in the agency:

Let's put it this way. This district was the first district in the state and you're telling me in the history of this district that we did not have qualified African Americans in this progressive State, that we did not have any qualified African

Americans here? I mean to the point of being even, you know, a secretary? Unacceptable. And in 1996, you're telling me that still would be the mentality? Unacceptable. I can't accept that. It changed when I got here . . . Okay, I'm here and it's changed. I would think it would be a clue. (34)

The respondent's performance in this position not only demonstrates to him that Black officers are capable of doing very difficult jobs, but importantly provides him with an understanding that the reason Black officers were never given an opportunity is because of racism in the agency. The most frequent manner of judging the consistency of events is comparing results for White and Black officers in terms of hiring, evaluation, discipline, promotion and assignment:

Things like that are very subtly done. I guess you just have to look at how you are treated, what things are routinely done. "Was this done because it's me?" You know, comparing myself to other sergeants in similar positions. Perhaps something like having to keep more detailed records or statistics to prove that things were going well as opposed to just the routine paperwork. (14)

One of the most powerful methods of examining the consistency of actions and behavior that respondents have relied on to legitimate their arguments about race is the outcome of lawsuits and arbitrators' rulings. These rulings are important experientially for respondents in developing an understanding of the relative differences in the treatment of White and Black officers in their departments. Respondents' argumentative comparisons are used throughout their discussions in later sections to develop their

understanding of the present relationship between race and policing.

In summary, respondents possess a general knowledge of racism and the interpretive tools necessary to comprehend the role of race and racism in events they encounter. This sophisticated ability to interpret events and actions and evaluate them as racist demonstrates the importance of race in shaping their daily lives. Years of personal and vicarious experiences linked to a cumulative, shared general body of knowledge about racism, as well as a specific knowledge of the operation of racism within their occupation, provides these respondents an ability to understand the current relationship between race and policing. The following section examines respondents' notions of the current nature of racism and the structuring factors which shape how racism operates in policing.

General Nature of Current Racism

We don't have the racial problem today that we had at that point. I feel the problems that we do have are pretty much equal with society and are covert enough to where we're not being actually slapped in the face with it the way we once were . . . Because of hatred and the way that some people are actually brought up, we're not gonna ever get past the racial problem, you know, that's not gonna ever go away, it's gonna always be a factor(42)

Respondents, most having worked in policing for twenty years or so, have seen the nature of racism transform modestly. Forty of the respondents' (80 percent) refer to

these changes and discuss the factors they perceive as structuring the changes. Importantly, respondents describe a transformation, not an elimination, of racism in policing, "Well, when you say much better, no, you can't say that it was much better, it just, in other words, it ceased shortly, but then it started merging in other little aspects"(44).

The transformation and the resulting structure of racism set the framework by which the current relationship of race and policing can be understood. Eleven respondents (22 percent) describe current racism as ranging from "overt" to "subtle" and/or "covert":

Typically here, you wouldn't encounter racism in the work environment. At least not from your co-workers, not the overt type. Now the hidden racism or the covert type of racism exists in every day life everywhere. You might pick up on some of that but nobody's gonna come to you and tell off-color jokes and stay here.(19)

In discussing the transformation of the general nature of racism, respondents are clear that racism still exists in some form. In fact, only two officers from the same agency (4 percent), the only two officers interviewed from that agency, do not discuss racism as having an impact on their lives. On the other hand, thirty-eight respondents (76 percent) discuss racism as being a structural problem, not merely an individual problem, by discussing what they perceive of as racism in specific institutions, the "social system" or "society in general." Although seven respondents

(14 percent) discuss individuals as being an important reason for the perpetuation of racism, only two (4 percent) solely discuss individual racists as the main problem that they encounter without discussing structural issues.

It is within this structural framework of racism that learning occurs. Reflecting on myriad encounters in which they have learned to comprehend racism, respondents almost unanimously agree that the socialization of White people is an important explanation for the continuation of racism:

They are practices that have been ingrained. It has been a part of the system and people are creatures of habit traditionally and sometimes it hard to break them. And sometimes they don't even view it as such unless it thought to be a sin. And its been a learning experience for me. (17)

This respondent implies that, due to how they were socialized, White people may not understand the ramifications of their actions unless pointed out to them as a "sin" or something of that magnitude. Acting on the messages they are taught, White people engage in activities that can be "unintentionally" racist. One example is given by the following respondent:

I have 19 years in law enforcement, what I've found is that people surround themselves by people who are very similar to themselves; with people who look very similar to themselves. They are with them in social circles and work place and have a better idea of what these people are capable of doing than they do of these people that they don't surround themselves with in the professional or a social setting. (17)

Paralleling the findings of Feagin and Vera (1985), many of the respondents in this project argue that White people raised segregated from Black people are not used to being with them either socially or professionally, therefore, they normally overlook them. The effect is to (re)produce racism intentionally or otherwise. Fifteen of the respondents (30 percent) described the result in policing as "the good old boy system" which perpetuates White male dominance through the exclusion of others. This system perpetuates racism through social segregation, maintaining current practices and disseminating ideas which legitimate those practices:

That was the good old boys' system . . . they left themselves deniability is what they did. And then you get some like-minded individuals that move up the chain and then you have the same problem. It reproduces itself. It feeds on itself. (46)

By denying entry to others, not only is an unfair system perpetuated, but racist ideas and beliefs are shared among White people through their interaction. In policing, older officers raised under strictly segregated social conditions who are a part of the good old boy network, can share their notions of racism with new officers and have a disproportional impact on the perpetuation of racism in policing. One respondent describes how he understands the process:

Those are the people that perpetuate what racism we have today. And unfortunately, some of those

younger people will continue up through their career and maintain those philosophies that have been instilled in their minds by the people they look up to and then they become those older disgruntled people and it just continues the vicious cycle.(42)

The good old boy system can be seen as a microcosm of racial relations in American society. Forty-two of the respondents (84 percent) feel that institutionalized racial segregation has fostered two distinct cultures, one Black and one White, with different beliefs, languages and understandings of racism. Because socialization occurs as an interaction with others and institutional processes, White and Black people are socialized to understand the world differently or, as Hacker might argue, socialized to understand the different worlds in which they live. Respondents argue that the result of this process can be seen in how Black and White officers police communities differently:

I think that most of the Black officers that I know, because of the way that we all were raised, we can associate or we can relate to what most of these people in these ghetto-type communities are dealing with, so we go in there and we understand what's going on. Whereas if the White officer goes in there, he's handling a call, basically. You know, there's no relating to, there's no feelings, there's no understanding, he's just handling that call and that's the majority of the time.(30)

Interestingly, because respondents were raised in or live in Black neighborhoods, but often encounter the White "world" through work, shopping, etc.; respondents argue that

they have the ability to understand both Black and White worlds better than White people do. Respondents argue that this enables them to survive in police agencies while treating members of the Black community more fairly:

I think there was a lack of understanding. You had two cultures and I think that there was not an understanding of each other, both sides, Black and White. But when you bring an officer in from the community, like myself, I think I had an understanding of both worlds. I understood the African-American community and I was beginning to understand the police culture. And the people in the community (knew me) so well, "I know he'll be here because I knew he grew up in this neighborhood. He can understand where everybody is coming from." (5)

Twenty-three respondents (46 percent) discuss how stereotypes develop as a result of this structural and cultural segregation. This finding supports the work of Bonilla-Silva who argues that, "generally, then, stereotypes are reproduced because they reflect the group's distinct position and status in society" (1997: 476). A lack of contact fosters a lack of understanding that is perpetuated through reliance on oversimplified notions of race. One officer discusses the extent of the stereotypes he encounters and techniques he has developed to enlighten White people who may unintentionally use negative stereotypes:

You have to really draw the people that have these prejudices, ignorance, out by just reversing the process and letting them see how foolish it looks. The correlation I would draw would be Pee Wee Herman. Several years ago he was caught in a movie

house masturbating. How would the person that asked a question of me feel when I reversed the tables and go, "Well, why do White males sit in movie theaters and masturbate?" Now that's about how idiotic that statement is particularly, when you're asked why Blacks steal, as if all Blacks do that or why the Blacks like rap music, as if all Blacks like rap music. And so, when you just simply turn the tables you just find they're White, he's White, but you don't know what was in that person's mind. Same thing goes with a Black that might commit a crime or be perceived of having committed a crime. I find anytime you use the term all or use any absolutes, you're showing that you have a prejudice because no absolute questions are correct. You know all African Americans are not athletic; all African Americans are not well endowed; average males are not well endowed. I mean these are myths and stereotypes that are out there that, you know, if you just took a little time and used your common sense and thought about it in terms of Whites and other races, you'll see how foolish they are. (19)

A final stereotype that respondents address as common is the notion which generalizes all Black people as being essentially the same. Respondents note how literature refers to "Black people" or EEOC quotas mandate a "Black person" without understanding the differences between them. Discussions of this stereotype illustrate the complexity of respondents' comprehension of racism. Although there was much agreement that, in general, White people and Black people are segregated from each other and learn to be different, respondents hold that specific learning processes experienced by individual White or Black people make them unique from other members of their racial group. As one respondent describes:

There are Blacks in this country, there are Blacks in this building that I have nothing in common with. I'm forty-seven, they're twenty-seven or thirty-seven. That haven't been in the military, that haven't been blatantly, openly discriminated against, they don't have my same frame of reference, they don't have what is inside of me, my hard driven attitude, you know. (25)

This is an important consideration for an understanding of how race impacts policing. There are many factors which structure racism in policing and officers' comprehension of that racism. The above respondent lists age, military and experience with racism as important. This illustrates that respondents differentiate between types of White people, ranging from overtly racist to supportive, and types of Black people. One respondent explains that, "some of the Black officers were just as bad as the others. Black officers become indoctrinated with the system or with racism, and they try hard to prove that they are one of the boys" (38).

Respondents' discussions illustrate a shared knowledge of the structure of racism. Racism in the US results from structural processes created and maintained by White people which segregate racial populations. Encountering different conditions, groups form distinct cultural practices and pass these on to others through socialization. These practices become accepted as natural and racial relations are (re)produced. Daily life thrusts people to interactional encounters with different group and institutional settings

requiring them to learn how to operate in these specialized settings. This process of differential learning accounts for individual differences among members of a racial group.

Structuring Factors of Racism

Respondents agree that the nature of racism ranges from being overt and hostile in some contexts to being more frequently covert and/or subtle in other contexts. However, White people continue to be perceived of as the primary agents of racism. One reason is that White people exclude members of other groups from their lives and share beliefs and stereotypes which define Black people as the problem. Having established this general nature of racism, respondents discuss factors which structure racism by (re)producing traditional practices or forcing transformation. It is important at this point to note that structuring factors can be those that are beyond the control of the respondents, such as the economy, or factors in which the respondents are intimately involved, such as the struggle for change. Discussions illustrate, for example, that attempting to change existing race relations serves as important source of knowledge about race relations as well as being a factor which structures those race relations.

Economy and Government

Eighteen respondents (36 percent) discuss the relationship between the economic and political institutions

as important factors shaping racism in America. One respondent's comments illustrate how respondents use their knowledge of the past to project future possibilities. The following example discusses the importance of a good economy in maintaining relative calm between Black and White people:

I would say we've made great strides in the out and out-right blatant racism, racist practices. There are still and always will be cliques in police departments, there are still and always will be subtle racism, there are still and always will be conspiracies of eating our young, so to speak, but I think we've made great strides. But what I will say is that as the economy goes, it has a direct reflection on the racist practices internally, on racist attitudes here in this agency and all police agencies. Minorities always suffer when things change. You let this economy start to slip, who you think gonna be the first to suffer? Are you gonna go across the street and help some Black kid when your own kid needs a job? I mean honestly, you know, if the economy starts to slip, the jobs start to move, start to leave who do you think gonna be the first to suffer? And so for Blacks to say, "well, you know, we're doing fine," and stuff like that, that's cause everybody can afford to be benevolent and nice when everything is going good, but when things start getting to the wire, people start looking out for their own . . . Yeah, you let a big recession come rolling in here and see what happens. Government can say all they want to say, people are going to do what they need to do to survive. It's gonna be like those guys when the riots came, standing on top of the building with their little guns protecting their own. (27)

This discussion of how Black people are historically the last hired and the first fired implies that in an ever transforming economic system, race relations can transform for the better or for the worse. The latter results from, in part, the entrenched racism that is never honestly addressed

in American society and surfaces as a result of increased competition over scarce opportunities. Another respondent, while acknowledging the importance of the economy for racial relations, notes how both business and political leaders, particularly the White elite, can structure racial relations depending on what they perceive to be in their best interest:

The people that are the king makers, the people that will determine who the sheriff will be or who the mayor will be, or whoever. They're very concerned about that conception and they want to turn all of that around and so we are seeing a change coming around in that way. Because it's not good for city and it's not a good image for this city. And if they ever want to do some things to change, to make [the city] look favorable, to make it a first class city, to attract businesses, to attract different opportunities into this community, they've got to show an image that is a lot more favorable than what it has been in the past. It's essential. For economics. (10)

An ever competitive world market system affects the nature of racism as leaders find it difficult to attract investment if there is a perception of overt racism in their city. These leaders, therefore, find it more profitable to address racism and push for changes which make their city more attractive to outside investors. Similarly, other respondents note the importance of economic and political leaders while discussing how in smaller cities, which may not be attempting to attract outside capital, the White elite may be less willing to push for change and attempt to maintain the racial status quo:

The political powers that be don't want that to happen for whatever reasons. I don't know, I'm just speculating, but they don't seem to want the change, the powers don't seem to want the changes in the community. They want to keep it the same. Status quo. To keep Blacks in their place. They don't want to see any Blacks rise to be a political power in their community. They want to keep them in their place. Like what, I'll allude to what I said earlier, this is the South.(24)

Further, in isolated counties and small towns the political will to change the structure of racism may not exist at all. One respondent from a town of 5,000 people illustrates how the influence of town leaders extends to the police force explaining that, "the power of the town council undermines the authority of the chief . . . no one on council is Black" (43). In smaller towns the police department cannot be considered distinct from the political leadership; the latter controls all aspects of the former. The lack of Black political representation results in the Black population's diminished ability to influence policies affecting policing.

The Public

When political and economic leaders are resistant to change, the public can be a force which pushes for a change in the structure of racial relations. Sixteen respondents (32 percent) described the importance of public pressure. One respondent describes what occurred in his city:

When public pressure started to build that public pressure changed City Hall. The community had to put pressure on the top people so it could filter

right on down to the police department. And as time passed a lot of those older people retired and were weeded out or they left and things began to change because of a new generation-type person was brought in with a different mentality and different views. (39)

Public outcries against perceived injustices and for changes have, historically, impacted the structure of racism as well as provided crucial insight into the operation of race in American society. The above respondent discusses how, ultimately, public pressure can affect police personnel decisions and the nature of policing. This supports earlier discussion which illustrates how members of the public often build support networks with Black officers. However, respondents' comments show that public pressure requires a level of organization to be sustainable. Therefore, race relations are generally poorer in communities that are not well organized.

Agency Leadership

Twenty-three other respondents (46 percent) argue that, even in communities and agencies where Black people are not well organized, professionally minded scholars, agencies and departmental leaders can take the initiative and push for changes in the nature of race relations in police agencies. These individuals may help develop initiatives, sets of rules and penalties which require changes in police behavior and have the effect of transforming the nature of race relations in policing. Accreditation is one such national

process discussed by a few of the respondents. One respondent illustrates how national standards of police behavior and mechanisms of enforcement, such as accreditation, pressure department heads to better control their agencies and reduce abuse:

There was some extensive abuse. But now, I think the fear of civil litigation that imputes to the department is causing that behavior to change. I think that's what it was. It's an economic issue now. It's not a moral issue anymore; do the right thing. It's don't get caught doing wrong because it's going to cost me money, and I'm going to throw you to the damn wolves is what it amounts to, and I think that's what motivated change. I don't think they did it out of the goodness or their heart or anything. Some I'm sure did. Some department head did, but the economic issue alone says, we can't do this. Police officers understand that they can be sued by the individual for that type of behavior. (46)

Overt racial hostility in the form of police abuses such as shootings have declined (Walker et al., 1996) partly as a consequence of national and departmental standards. However, respondents demonstrate that this does not mean that racism has been eliminated or that race relations have improved. They argue, rather, that racism still drives the hearts and minds of White people, but the behavioral manifestations have transformed out of political and economic necessity:

There's a lot of money being rewarded to a lot of people and when you hit an agency in their budget, hit 'em in the purse, that sends a strong message. So they had to start addressing those issues and no, I don't think it was willingly, the change didn't come willingly. (42)

Expanding on the notion that only the manifestations of racism have changed, another respondent notes the economic incentive of White officers to control their behavior in order to ensure job security and the ability to support their families despite their continuing racist attitudes towards Black people:

There is a heck of a problem in most police departments today trying to educate or do something enlightening. What they're doing, is they're changing the way they behave, they're not changing their attitude about it. No. They have too much time invested in their careers and they're not going to leave because of that, and that's a problem. (46)

The incentive, therefore, exists for department heads to push for changes in their agencies and for officers not to get caught engaging in unacceptable behavior. However, respondents note that the political dynamics of police agencies make it very difficult for real change to occur in race relations. There is considerable agreement that the chief, or the person at the top, sets the tone for change, but this does not guarantee that change will occur. The following respondent discusses the complexity of the process:

The chief has to say, okay this is what I want and this is how it's done for it to start. But the problem comes [when the] chief is all for it, but he's hired the wrong people to put it into practice and so you still have the little inner groups who say, "well we don't really have to do it," and the chief doesn't know. Now if you have one who checks back or you have everybody going,

"well you're going to have to do it" and kind of force the issue, then things start to change. If they think it's all just a smoke screen for the public that they don't have to follow it, then it will never change. Even then, it's not going to be a drastic change, the chief and the command staff have to be able to follow it through for any change at all to occur. But even when the command and the chief all say, "okay, we're going to do this," they get resistance from the troops, but the troops will eventually fall in line. It has to come from the top, but the only ones who really do it are the bottom. It's always like the top needs this diversity or they need this or whatever and it looks great on paper, but they don't want to have to butt heads with the people who actually have to do the work. (41)

There has to be a point in which the chief, his command and supervisory staff, and patrol officers are agree on what must take place for change to occur. Respondents noted the difficulty in having all levels of an agency agreeing how to improve race relations therefore limiting the extent of change. Further, respondents were unanimous in the view that where the agency head is racist, racist attitudes and behaviors by command staff and officers are more overt. Therefore, the tone set by the leadership is crucial in shaping race relations in an agency.

A final aspect of leadership that respondents' discuss is how the requirements of supervisory and command level positions distances leaders from other officers in the department, as well as the community, and can make them less aware of the behaviors engaged in by their subordinates. One respondent explains that since becoming a boss:

I haven't experienced any overt racism, but I'm not naive enough to think that it's not occurring. [I'm] quite sure there is subtle racism. In my position, by me being the district commander and the boss, I'm going to experience less subtle racism than, let's say, one of my Black troopers or female troopers because there's a double-whammy there. One I'm the boss and I can respond with authority so they're gonna be careful not to mess up, whether it's racism or policy violation or anything; and then, number two, that subtleness, from knowing that it's improper from the beginning in guarding against that, those two factors together enhance or make it far more important for the individuals not to be caught engaging in any type of improper conduct whatsoever. (42)

His discussion illustrates an empathy for other minority officers that lack his authority as well as an understanding that subtleties are related to intent. Similar to discussions above, this respondent separates behavior from attitude to illustrate the current form of racism. That an act is subtle is demonstrative of a knowledge on the part of the actor that the act is not acceptable and punishable. Further, Black officers are shielded from racism to the extent of their rank position in the agency, experience and their gender.

Apart from discussions of how structural conditions and political/departmental leadership structure race relations, respondents discuss demographic factors which structure race relations and impact officers' ability to work well in their agencies and in the communities they police. The first of these is the location of the agency.

Location of the Agency

Respondents posit that agencies with greater numbers of Black officers, stronger communities of Black officers and/or organized Black communities have less overt racism than other agencies. Arguing that his department was a better place for Black officers due to years of collective struggle that culminated in current Black leadership, one respondent was very clear that his department was not the norm experienced by Black officers:

It'd be something else somewhere else in a rural area or some other place because I talk to friends that I have in [a near-by] county and you know the stuff that I went through in the 70's they're going through now. The opportunities are just not there and ugh you know they hired because they have to or hold on to you because they have to but you can't go anywhere you can't do anything so it depends on where you are, you know. We just have a large department here and there's enough opportunities for everyone. (10)

Fifteen respondents (30 percent) had similar comments comparing their agencies with either agencies in northern states or agencies within their own state. The consensus seem to be that Black people, Black officers in particular, face more overt and hostile forms of racism in rural areas than in urban areas. A female respondent in a state agency notes that this ill treatment is compounded by gender:

Depending on the county, there's no conflict or they haven't had to move to the 20th century. I've been called gal when I've been to rural counties. Or me and a White agent go and they only talk to him and don't realize that at the end, it's gonna be my decision . . . I investigate politicians or

local sheriffs or whatever, in small counties, and you can see the expression when I walk in the door, they kind of stand back and so they're watching everything that I do. It's the way they talk to you or the way they hesitate like you probably don't understand English, or talking down to you because they're not real sure your understand. (41)

Respondents' discussions illustrate that it is not only the communities they work in that structure race relations, but the community that they grew up in and shaped their ideas about the world as well.

Community of Origin

There's no compassion in the nineties. There's no sense of community, there's no sense of belonging, there's no tie. Most of your officers now that we are hiring are not born and raised in this community. Go back and look at the seventies and eighties, most of the officers were born right here in this community, they were hired from this community. Now, these people are coming in from other places, and so there's no tie, there's no base line to start with and say, well this is my community, I want to see it get better. And see, people like myself, I was born and raised in this community. (24)

Black officers in the 60's and 70's often policed communities that they grew up in. Today, because of an increased demand for Black officers, Black workers go where the pay is better and there is a perception of greater reward. Respondents discuss how recruiting pulls Black officers from their home communities to "better" jobs in other, more often urban communities. The result, as 16 respondents (32 percent) discuss, is that the lack of an intimate knowledge of the community and weaker bonds with

residents promotes a distance between the community and the officer recruited from another community. While many of the respondents argue that Black officers can adapt more easily than White officers to the Black communities in which they are strangers, the community of origin is discussed as a factor that structures the relationship of race and policing.

Age

Ten other respondents (20 percent) lament, on the other hand, that the reason for this changing relationship is the age of the officers, not merely their community of origin. Respondents argue that both the scarcity of Black officers in agencies and the social distance that exists between Black supervisors and recently hired Black officers promotes conditions in which newer Black officers are not sufficiently socialized by more experienced Black officers to develop a specialized knowledge of the operation of racism in police agencies. Therefore, they do not learn to understand the struggle and sacrifices against segregation made by older officers and overlook the necessity for continuing struggle:

We can't forget that, I don't forget that. In the back of your mind you know that you didn't get here because they waved their magic wand. There was a lot of blood, sweat and tears that went into it and that made it better for everybody. The difficult thing is that some of the younger people don't understand; they never experienced that. (15)

Coupled with the changing social conditions that younger Black people have encountered since the 1970s, respondents argue that another result has been that younger Black officers also have less of an identification with the members of the Black communities they police:

These young officers don't have that same sort of identity and I think those officers that we thought, the young guys coming on with better education and raised in integrated schools, knew something about other people, that would make a difference in the way they treated and handled people. And that's just not the truth. Young people, in my opinion, really don't care about other people a whole lot. They do their job, they're not as concerned, they're not as apt to go out of their way to help someone or to see that the job is done properly. They follow the book and the book says, "I go and I check and I don't see, I drive off." Then that's what they do. So, it's a difference and I don't think that difference is for the better. (9)

Respondents maintain, therefore, that Black people draw upon a collective knowledge of racism, but the extent of their shared understanding depends upon factors which structure learning such as age, experience and community bonds.

Social Class

Similarly, eighteen respondents (36 percent) note the effect of officers' social class on their ability to police Black communities. Despite their race, being raised in a social class that is different from the social class of the people in a community being policed creates problems in communication:

It depends upon the background of that African-American officer. If the African-American officer has come from a socioeconomic background that is out of the mainstream of the Black community they may have problems because they may not understand the culture of the disadvantaged African-American. It could be a totally new experience to them, so just because you're Black does not necessarily mean that you're gonna come in a neighborhood and that you can get along better with the Black community than a White officer. It really depends on the officer, the officer's character, the officer's knowledge of the community and the individuals that they're interacting with.(5)

In this discussion, as with others, the dominant theme is that an officer's knowledge of a group of people in a community influences the quality of the interaction. Black officers who have been socialized to understand the general operation of racism in America, the respondents agree, generally develop better relationships in Black communities. When they lack information about a specific community or their learning is skewed by social class, relationships with the community can become more antagonistic. The level of an officer's education can have a similar distancing effect.

Education

Despite the possibility that education creates social distance between Black people, none of the respondents discuss the level of education as having an adverse impact on their relationships with members of poorer Black communities. Eleven respondents (22 percent) discuss how their educational level was perceived by White officers as threatening and affected inter-departmental relationships.

One officer stated:

It was a racial problem that was compounded by an educational problem. See, the racial problem existed before I got there. And then once they found out that I had an education, for example, when I first got there, the watch commander and sergeant came to me and told me that if I kept an eye on all of the other Blacks, I didn't have nothing to worry about. And my question was, "if I keep an eye on them today, who's going to keep an eye on me for you tomorrow?" So I said the circle has to stop somewhere. And I'm not going to be a part of that. So that was the feeling. The racial problem was there. It was always there, but like I said before, it was compounded by the educational differences. (35)

White control of Black officers has become more difficult as more educated Black officers are hired. Respondents note the contradictory nature of this process: (1) to limit the number of Black officers hired, White agencies created a criterion that demanded a higher level of education; (2) more well-educated Black candidates applied, were hired and demanded changes in policing by using their knowledge of regulations and the willingness to organize and sue; (3) eventually some of these well-educated Black officers were better equipped to compete for leadership positions and were able to promote change in their agency. The educational level of Black officers serves to structure race relations to the extent they use education to push for change and/or to the extent they are perceived as threats to the existing structure of race relations because of their education.

Gender

Another, important factor, that structures race relations is gender. Eighteen respondents (36 percent) noted advantages Black men have over Black women in adapting to and being successful in policing. Discussions with female respondents seem to be a process of reflection on past experiences and construction of an understanding of the dynamic interrelationship of race and gender that shapes their lives. For example, the following respondent discusses how White women are treated better than all Black officers throughout the conversation. She then concludes by examining how all women officers share similar experiences:

I tell somebody, it's like I've got a double whammy. I'm a woman and I happen to be Black. Because, what was ironic is I used to walk around the police department with this chip on my shoulder, and I have this White female lieutenant, her and I used to butt heads together, and I used to tell her, I used to complain about some of the stuff that they did. And because we didn't talk, we didn't know what was going on, so she told me one day, we were talking about something, and she says, oh, that happened to me, too. I says, you're kidding. I says, you mean to tell me all this time I thought they were doing this to me because I was Black. Oh, no, I could have told you they're doing it because we're women. So I think it's more so because we're women, because I know I said that the [White] female would get better preference, but they still treat the men as men. (1)

Interestingly, female respondents, at different moments of their discussions, place emphasis on race or on gender. There exists a notion that Black women find themselves in a unique position in police agencies and encounter many

factors which determine whether race or gender will play a dominant role in their experience. It is clear, however, that these women find themselves evaluating whether race, gender or both influence their encounters with others in and outside of their agency. This finding parallels the findings of St. Jean and Feagin (1998). For example, one respondent stresses the importance of agency leaders and supervisors in structuring her experience:

I guess it depends on what section you are in, who your supervisor is, because there are some people who have no problem with race, but law enforcement being male-oriented, that's what they have a problem with first. Because if I was a Black male, I was still a guy and we could do guy things together. And then you have other supervisors or people who don't want to associate with another race period and a women is just like putting icing on the cake to make it worse.(41)

This comment embodies the sentiments of many male and female respondents: Black officers are treated worse in general than White officers, and female officers are treated worse than male officers, so being Black and female creates a unique set of experiences. As one female supervisor concludes, "to a certain degree, African American men have face some of the same barriers, and encounter similar problems, but as the saying goes, until you walk a mile in my shoes..." (17).

Strategies to Cope with and/or Resist Racism

An understanding of the nature of racism and the factors which structure it can be furthered by an analysis

of respondents' discussions of the strategies they have developed to cope with or resist racism. Importantly, it must be assumed that these strategies are reflective of respondents' knowledge of racism. This section, therefore, is much more of a focus on how knowledge is acquired in the struggle for change than a mere reporting of respondents' notions of how social change occurs. As respondents attempt to change a system of oppression, their strategies and the reaction of White people to these strategies, serves as an important source of knowledge about the complex operation of racism. Further, their successes and failures structure current and future race relations and sets the framework in which other Black and White people will experience the social world and learn their place in it.

Collective Struggle

Forty-two of the respondents (84 percent) discuss a range of strategies that they have used when confronted with racism from personal perseverance to organized struggle. Older respondents raised in the segregated South express collective solidarity and the will to fight injustices:

The Blacks in the South, especially Black men, was seen as submissive and not prone to stand up for themselves. Other guys, who'd gone and fought or who'd been in the military and prepared to fight, I think we were different about things in life, period. Because we went over there to fight for what I thought was supposed to be this country's best interest, perhaps it was time to fight back here for what I perceived to be our people's best interest. It was just that I had seen stuff coming

up as a small child. I had said I'm not gonna let this happen to me, you know. I'm not going to take this anymore. (7)

These respondents see their entry into policing as reflective of the desires of Black people fighting for social change and as necessary to ensure fairer treatment of Black people in general. Therefore, they do not just accept their new jobs with gratitude, but fight to ensure that Black officers will forever be an integral part of policing:

We didn't ask what the rules said . . . We went everywhere. We didn't want their interpretation. We knew Black lawyers and so that became a problem. Well, we got job slots. We forced the sheriff at the time, the White sheriff, to open up job slots for Black officers. We showed the need for Black officers. We had nothing to do directly with the actual hiring of who got the job, but we fought for the job slot. We fought for officers to work in the police department. Like now. We have Blacks all over the police department. (35)

Respondents' understandings that they are part of a collective struggle against racism in America and in policing specifically--their goals, expectations, and actions--is induced by racist events encountered personally or vicariously. Respondents illustrate that they have developed a horizon of future race relations for which they prepare with the help of others:

You have to realize that it takes time to change attitudes and maybe some attitudes won't ever change, so you have to keep it in check and go on with your life and my father-in-law says that you can't fight every battle, but you have to pick the battle. And if ever a time comes that I have to pick one, I'll have to pick one to fight. (50)

The cumulative knowledge of racism allows respondents to form pre-emptive strategies to meet potential problems rather than merely react to problems once they are encountered. Further, that their responses are shared and protracted reflects their understanding of the institutionally entrenched nature of American racism; respondents maintain that the struggle against racism must be one that changes institutions, not merely racist individuals.

Personal Sacrifice

One respondent discusses how he continuously uses racism as motivation to persevere individually and improve conditions for others:

I don't know if I'd be where I am today had I not experienced a lot of the racism that I did because some of the things, you know, actually cause me to go home and sit and meditate on them and, you know, dog gone it, I'm gonna do something about this. I felt that it was my responsibility to go through the ranks and diversify the command staff and to present, you know, an African American perspective to the changes that, we're gonna be facing in the future and that was my sole purpose for promotion. It's my obligation to take it and to go and to fight racism and harassment and to make sure that the things that I've experienced do not occur anymore to anybody and that's pretty much my life mission as long as I'm a trooper. I used it as motivation and energy. (42)

Respondents' insistence on recognizing their role in shaping the current nature of racism in policing through their actions is unique among accounts found in literature

on policing. Respondents stress a sense of collective solidarity with other Black people even when describing their personal struggles. Fourteen respondents (28 percent) stress that proving themselves, continually learning and fighting back are ways that they can improve conditions for other Black people. In discussing how her personal sacrifice benefited another, one respondent noted, "I really didn't benefit because of the lawsuit. Monetarily I did, but as far as advancement, I'll never get promoted. They ain't going to promote me. But I know that the female lieutenant went to school because of me" (1).

Through personal sacrifice, officers place their own advancement at risk and face the possibility of retaliation from others. Despite the dangers, many officers find their responsibility to challenge racism greater than the potential risks.

Transforming Policing

Beyond improving conditions for Black officers, another respondent discusses how the collective actions of Black officers benefits White officers and further transforms agencies, "when we filed our EEOC complaint, as a matter of fact, it benefited White males more than it did us . . . Recruiting a better Black cop they were forced to recruit a better White cop to compete" (25).

However, respondents understand that racism in policing cannot be eliminated by hiring "better" White officers. Facing entrenched racism and the considerable resistance mounted by White people, eight respondents (16 percent) noted the necessity of forming Black unions to promote Black officer solidarity, serve as a base from which to socialize younger Black people and act as a powerful tool to alter policing through the recruitment and training of Black officers. One respondent discusses the continuing need for solidarity despite changes in the nature of racism:

We were forced to form a Black association, a Black brotherhood of police officers. We tried to bring those [young] cops in and tell them, "this is how you survive the system" . . . The system has a way--they love to bring them back to reality. You may be all of that, you may have all the money in the world the bottom line is you're still . . . Collin Powell knows how far to go. (25)

Respondents argue that the continual recruitment of Black officers can ensure that changes in race relations continue and structural inequities in police agencies can be overcome. The union plays an essential role in this process:

We decided we'd take our organization on a different mission, and that mission was that we were going to go out and actively recruit Black police officers and tell the story of what was going on in the police department . . . It wasn't until '83 that we reached a hundred Black police officers; and that was due to raising total hell with the sheriff . . . That wasn't done because they wanted to do it. If you truly want to hire African American police officers, it's a constant struggle and you have to keep pushing. (3)

Organization and collectivity are appropriate strategies for long-term, protracted struggle. The collectivity understands that the future of Black officers in policing depends on the organized struggle to increase their numbers in police agencies. However, as the following respondent discusses, recruiting alone is not enough to ensure the retention of the Black officers that have been successfully recruited:

Our Black police organization? One of the main reasons that it was formulated was to serve as a mentor program for new recruits coming in the department to let them know that, "look when you need help, you don't only turn to your field training officer, but there is another resource out here, another avenue that can help you with your difficulty before it's too late, you know, don't wait till the day before you're dismissed before you ask for help." We introduce ourselves to the new recruits long before they get into any difficulty. And I think it just helps them feel more welcome here too, you know, the police culture, I mean, it's a strange culture, it's so fraternal that, you know, when you're coming inside from the outside, it's difficult I think, particularly as an African American officer. We've tried to beef-up our FTO program and get more Black training officers.(14)

Support, training and socialization are, therefore, important responsibilities taken on by organizations of Black officers in an attempt to remain a viable force in policing. However, formal organizations such as Black officer unions are not the norm in most agencies. Many respondents in this study had never belonged to a Black officer union, for example. There are processes which thwart

attempts to unionize in some agencies and in other agencies the numbers of Black officers are too low for this type of collectivity. Yet, even respondents in smaller agencies without unions have formed loose collectivities that continually work to increase and maintain the number of Black officers in departments. One respondent discusses the efforts of Black officers in her department:

We have a cadet program, an explorer program, as a way to develop African American police officers. And recently we have hired two that came through the cadet program. We have some in training, and some in the academy. So that program has helped attract African American men. In the past you would have to pay to go to the academy to be certified and that was another way that White males got hired. But the process now, we will hire non-certified officers and send them on to the academy and both of these programs have helped bring on a number of primarily African American males. (17)

This comment illustrates how collectivities can work to promote change, while raising issues which remain difficult to resolve. For example, her discussion shows that efforts to recruit have been successful for Black males, but not for Black females. Black women officers must, therefore, play an even more active role to ensure that increasing the number of Black officers also means increasing the number of Black female officers.

The strategy to increase the number of Black officers, to change racism in policing, is also dependent on the number of Black officers in command positions and the extent

of Black collectivity to push for advancement and provide support. Twenty respondents (40 percent) stress the role of Affirmative action policies which support advancement. One captain discussed why it is necessary:

I'm always in favor of it because without that, there wouldn't be any incentive for Whites to even consider Blacks for [a] position . . . I'm a minority and I have nothing unique to bring to you that you can't get from anybody else in your own racial group, what would make you consider me? Unless you've got something to force them to look at other issues; nothing. I mean, there has to be something there to make you consider me in order for me, as an average guy, you know, to stand a chance of getting a job. Because, just simple mathematics, always I'm gonna be outnumbered as far as number of people that are participating, even though our skills may be identical, you know. I also understand too that people have a tendency to look out for their own. (27)

The need for Black supervisors and command staff is a common theme among respondents. They argue that sustainable changes can only occur if Black officers are in all levels of police agencies. One respondent notes that Black supervisors are essential to reduce the occupational and social distance between Black command staff and Black patrol officers:

We need more people in command positions. We have some, but in mid-management, the lieutenant positions and sergeant positions, there needs to be more Black supervision in that. That will be one of my goals that I will deal with. We've got to get more of these guys to come in and take the sergeant test. (3)

Respondents maintain that Black command and supervisory staff can be effective role models for younger Black people,

increase Black participation in all areas of the agency, effect political processes and work to transform the nature of racism. These Black leaders can use their understanding of the operation of racism to develop and enforce policies to limit and transform it. For example, one department head, arguing that structural changes in the department were not enough, described how part of his mission is to promote diversity training to effect changes in the attitudes of White officers:

Force feed it, that's the only way we've got to the point that we are now. The system or the legislature or our overseers had to literally open the mouth of police agencies and dump diversity into their esophagus. We're gonna need more force feeding of diversity training, I think it's probably gonna take more than once every four years. It should be something that's an annual training to where they're so sick of hearing from it, they'd either get on the band wagon, you know, and really sincerely realize that people are people regardless of what color they are, or they'll get out because we don't need law enforcement officers carrying guns that harbor, you know, such biased views . . . The people that don't have a problem with diversity, they're not gonna have a problem with more training and more force feeding, in fact, they'll accept it. That's what's got us to the point that we are now and that seems to be the only thing that works to attach their career to their ability to treat everyone fairly and with equal justice.(42)

Interestingly, some respondents who argue that there needs to be more Black command staff to promote the interests of Black officers and work to change racism in policing acknowledge that too much of a change can create a White backlash and thwart changes. Therefore, Black command

staff have been forced to adopt a "colorblind" approach which advocates fairness according to one's capabilities:

We have Black police officers that think that the Sheriff owes us something as African Americans, but he doesn't. The only thing I can ask the Sheriff to do is to continue doing what he's doing, he's treating everybody as fair. Everybody in this police department has a fair chance at anything they want. (18)

These respondents demonstrate how Black people draw on their knowledge of racism to develop strategies for change and how the strategies further impact their level of knowledge about the nature of racism and the factors which structure it. First, Black people share knowledge of the range of responses employed by White people to protect their social position and, therefore, act to diminish White backlash, secondly, respondents who have experiences with unfair treatment perpetuated by the subjective decisions of White leaders, choose not to be similarly unfair in their treatment of others now that they are in leadership positions. If racial relations were improved and racism all but eliminated, these considerations would be unnecessary; the color of officers and their position in an agency would be of no concern. However, knowledge of the nature of racism permits respondents to concur, not only that Black command staff have to adopt this strategy, but are a group of people whose negative experiences permit them to enact it and eventually make agencies fairer. Respondents share the

notion that, having experienced injustices, they are better able to recognize how injustice operates and work to prevent it.

Improving Life in Communities

The final strategy that Black officers adopt illustrates their understanding that although racism is a part of policing, it is further an integral part of American society. Respondents argue that racism cannot be addressed in just one institution, such as policing, but must be addressed in all simultaneously. Black solidarity is, therefore, not only essential within policing between Black officers but further important between members of Black communities, including Black officers. Thirty-three respondents (66 percent) discuss the necessity of working with communities to combat racism and improve the quality of life. An elderly officer described how he and others have worked to improve life in their communities:

This PAL [Police Athletic League] they have now, an officer and I started that and we would do that with the youngsters and its a big thing out there now. But he and I took some old balls and bats and whatever and play football and baseball with the kids and it grew from that. One of the officers that got killed, he started a savings and loan club he turned into an organization. And from that we were able to do a lot of things for the people who were needy that we knew about. We would provide food for them or clothes or whatever the case might be. Every Thanksgiving and Christmas we would give food baskets and it was real beneficial. (11)

This discussion illustrates that respondents realize that solutions to complex problems require more than individual success or perseverance. Officers from poor, segregated Black communities develop a personal sense of responsibility beyond that which other officers may have. One respondent describes the magnitude of the commitment she has to other members of her race as opposed to her gender:

I tried to tell one White female supervisor, that the stress I had from the Black community was totally different than she would experience as a White female because people are dependent upon me. I am now put up there like the gift horse and I've gotta make things happen because the community is so small and, whether I want to be or not, I hold a job, I hold a leadership position. And I'm called on the carpet all the time. (20)

Although gender structures experiences with racism, this respondent's comments illustrate the centrality of race in shaping the experiences of these officers. Respondents further discuss how, beyond their personal commitment to the social welfare of Black communities, they work to change the nature of policing by promoting Problem Solving or Community Oriented Policing which seeks to empower Black communities, promote better police-citizen relations and increase community control over policing. One respondent notes the benefits:

Things have improved from that standpoint and because the nature of how police officers are deployed now through community oriented policing is such that a lot of these Black officers are put in situations in these lower socio-economic communities where they are counseling kids,

counseling parents, so now there is more balance to what a Black police officer does out there.
(26)

Respondents' discussions illustrate how strategies depend on their understanding of the problem. For example, comments imply that if racism had been eliminated or was merely the independent acts of individual racists, it would not be necessary to adopt strategies such as building schools for disadvantaged Black children, sponsoring food drives for Black communities or raising money to send Black youth to college. Clearly, the range of these strategies reflects respondents' understanding of the widespread institutional nature of racism. Yet, despite their efforts, respondents realize the enormity of the task:

The Black officers, we have an organization here. We put Black officers together, we do fund-raisers and we give out scholarships every year to minority inner city students who want to go to college. The only prerequisite is that they have to write a paper on how crime or violence impacts their neighborhood. So, you know that is some of the ways we as officers try to go back in and try to make a difference, but no, we're just a fly on the wall. It's gonna take so much. (28)

Comments like this reflect respondents' understanding of the enormity of the problem that Black communities face. Black officers have the capability to address racism and work for specific changes in policing, yet racism will persist in policing to the extent that it persists in other societal institutions and society in general. Another respondent concurs that racism and racial inequities can,

therefore, only be solved by a tremendous effort involving myriad agencies and groups of concerned people:

There is no way in Hell that one single entity is going to address that. You've got to form a coalition with other groups that are experts and the various entities and then you pull them together and then you can address some of the problem. (5)

This type of discussion calls into question notions of racism which argue that it can be solved in one institution or setting while existing in others. Respondents posit that a multi-faceted, broad reaching approach to racism is necessary to create real changes

In summary, this discussion demonstrates how respondents share a general knowledge of the nature of current racism as operating as an interrelationship between structural processes and individual behavior. Black and White people are perceived of as different to the extent that they have been differentially socialized to view the world and their place in it. Due to structural changes and collective struggle, the nature of racism is described as having transformed from merely overt to a continuum that ranges from overt to covert. The form of racism encountered varies according to structuring factors which converge to shape the specialized nature of racism within an institution, specific agency or a particular encounter. Finally, a discussion of strategies developed and shared by Black people further illustrates how their knowledge and

understanding of the nature of racism affects their notions of responsibility as well as their understanding of the future.

Summary

I would like to think that one day we would have a department where everybody cares about everybody, but I know that I won't be here to see that. I won't, I don't foresee that happening for the next 50 or 60 years, you know, cause people are people and that's just the way they are. I mean, in 1997 you got people that say, "Well if my daughter married a Black guy, I'll kill her" and stuff like that. And you see that people in that old time mentality and what they do is they teach it to their kids and their kids teach it to their kids and on and on and on and it never stops. There is definitely racism in our department and I'm not saying it's the administration but, it's gonna always be there until you can wipe it out and I don't know how you're gonna do that with generations being taught it, generation after generation after generation. (22)

In this chapter, respondents demonstrate that they possess a sophisticated knowledge about racism that they have acquired through a differentiated process of socialization. This finding supports the work of Essed (1991) and other scholars within the experiential-racism framework. However, due perhaps to the occupational limitations of the sample, respondents show that they not only possess a knowledge of the general nature of racism in society but a knowledge of the specific operation of racism in policing as well. Knowledge of racism is manifested as individually cumulative as well as collectively shared.

Discussions illustrate the importance of vicarious as well as experiential knowledge.

Further, respondents develop and operate from an interpretative methodology which they use to understand encounters with racism. This methodology allows respondents to evaluate and explain, through argumentation, if encounters are specific examples of racism. Further, drawing on this knowledge, respondents form an understanding of the current nature of racism as well as the factors which structure it. Although the ubiquitous experience of racism provides the basis for Black solidarity, differences of class, age, gender, education, community of origin, etc. structure the differential experiences of Black people with racism as well as their ability to evaluate encounters.

Respondents illustrate that traditional distinctions between institutional and individual racism in criminology are misleading and insufficient to explain the reproduction of racial inequality in society. Respondents focus on structural conditions that frame the process of socialization that shape the ideas of both White and Black people. Strategies to cope with and/or combat racism, therefore, are developed in relation to respondents' understanding of the nature of racism. This understanding guides respondents' understanding of the past, present and future and of their place within the social system.

Importantly, beyond basing their actions on their knowledge of racism, respondents involvement in actions aimed at changing the nature of race relations furthers their understandings of the complex operation of racism. It is an important conclusion, therefore, that respondents demonstrate their active involvement in producing and sharing knowledge rather than just acquiring it as Essed (1991) focuses on.

In the following chapters, respondents' knowledge of racism will be used to explore the current operation of racism in policing. The three main processes of maintaining racial conflict posited by Essed (1991)--marginalization, problematization and containment--will be employed as sensitizing concepts to guide the examination. Structural and ideological processes will be examined as well as institutional and individual acts. Respondents' discussions will help to clarify the extent of the transformation of racism in policing, illustrate continuing problems, point out future research needs and potential solutions.

CHAPTER FOUR
MARGINALIZATION:
WHITE-CENTRISM and OBSTACLES IMPEDING EQUAL PARTICIPATION
ANALYSIS of DATA (PART II)

Introduction

This is still the South and Blacks have a certain place, and the White establishment wants to keep those Blacks in their place. And they do that by enacting certain policies that keep the good old boys in the system and keep the people that are a threat to them out of the system. So. And they're doing it quite effectively. (24)

This respondent's comments echoes themes developed in many of the interviews. Black officers, despite their strong desires to advance and the tangible transformations in the general nature of racism they have witnessed in the last twenty years, argue that barriers still exist which thwart Black people's entry into policing and their advancement once they become officers. Race relations scholars have long referred to this as "discrimination" while Essed (1991) refers to it as a form of racism she calls "marginalization" and argues that it is reflective of an existing color hierarchy in the United States. Although political changes, exemplified by affirmative action programs, have permitted the advancement of limited numbers of Black people in American institutions, the majority continue to encounter

racial oppression demonstrating to them that they are unwanted.

In this chapter, respondents discuss various methods by which White people continually exclude them from equally sharing in the fruits of American society. These methods are attitudinal and ideological, such as the defining of White as the normative color and only accepting Black people defined as "good Blacks" to serve token roles in society. This differentiation, legitimizes the many obstacles which Black people encounter. As this project examines the police occupation, respondents discuss general barriers encountered in the larger society, but specifically focus on barriers encountered in police agencies. However, it is important to note how continuing racial segregation in the larger society impacts the ability of Black people to become police officers and advance through the ranks.

Finally, respondents discuss how many barriers are overt and intentional, but many others are subtle and/or unintentional. White people are perceived of as having taken many of these for granted--as the natural order of things--while Black people are able to understand the nature of obstacles due to shared knowledge of racism and personal experiences. This chapter will begin by examining attitudinal notions which (re)produce racism, then examine barriers which marginalize Black people in the larger society and conclude with a more in-depth examination of barriers which operate within police agencies.

[In the north] the only time you saw the borders were when you walked in and bumped into it. So, I feel like the South has grown into that process. The obvious borders no longer exist but you're still in a certain place. It's just the things that you see going on around you. (7)

Cognitive Detachment

As the dominant racial group in America, White people do not encounter institutionalized racism and, therefore, are able to detach themselves from the reality of racism. Shared understandings of the world from a dominant perspective become the norm making it impossible for the majority of White people to see the world from the point of view of those who are continually reminded of their color and the subordinate position attached to that color. Feagin and Vera (1995) posit that White people develop "sincere fictions" by which they understand their inert role in race relations. White people ignore racism and treat the subject of racism as though it were unimportant. To the extent White people are able to cognitively detach themselves from racism, they feel that they are not responsible for the racial problems that are experienced and discussed by Black people as having an impact on all aspects of their everyday lives.

Lack of Responsibility for Race Relations

Six respondents (12 percent) discuss one form of cognitive detachment as the ways in which White officers demonstrate to them that they feel no particular responsibility for race relations. The following respondent

discusses the comments frequently made by White officers during multi-cultural training sessions:

You know, if a person says, "Well I wasn't here 200 years ago; I never owned any slaves; why do I have to suffer?" Good question, you know. Because the slavery was 200 years ago, as I said, in my lifetime, I can still remember equal, equal and separate and not equal. And because of the sins of the past, we are attempting to get to the level where we should have been or could have been had it not been for the sins of the past. And unfortunately, no you were not living in that time, your daddy didn't own any slaves, but my grandparents, my great-grand's and great-great-grand's just happened to have been slaves. No I might not have been a part of it, but believe me, it's been passed down to me. When I look back in my history, I can't see many professionals. You can. You know, where are my mentors? They were somebody's slaves because they weren't given the opportunities. That's why . . . we have been the under-privileged. We didn't ask for it, we didn't ask to come here, we were minding our own business. You can't just wave a wand and say, "Okay, no more racism" and believe that because the laws have changed, suddenly everything's gonna be okay. I mean, you know, it'd be nice but it just doesn't happen that way. (14)

This discussion demonstrates how, on one hand, White people are able to detach themselves from injustices and argue that they occurred only in the past, conveniently ignoring the material benefits White people have accrued from racial oppression. On the other hand, it illustrates the lasting effects of racial oppression on Black people by denying past generations educational and occupational opportunities which created an entrenched color hierarchy that has been difficult to overcome. Further, as Black people pass down knowledge of the operation of racism from

generation to generation, White people seemingly pass down the idea of superiority and merit; that the societal position they occupy is the result of individual hard work and not exploitation.

Another manifestation of cognitive detachment is the overemphasis on racial differences by which White people feel they can never understand Black people. Consequently, they look to Black people as interpreters of the behavior of other Black people, "they assume that all Black people think alike, but that's not the way it is..." (12). Indifference to the experiences and problems of Black people results in White people treating some Black people as experts on all aspects of the behavior of Black people in general or what Feagin and Sikes (1994) call being regarded as a "spokesperson for the race":

As an example, someone will come up to me and say, "Why do Blacks do this?" Okay, and I am not an expert on Blacks. I'm an expert on [me] and I happen to be Black and I'll tell you what I do or the Blacks that I know do or what their opinions are that they've expressed, but I'm not expert on being Black. (19)

Exaggerating the differences between Black and White people and maintaining that the two groups cannot understand each other ideologically legitimizes the color hierarchy in which White people are defined as normative and Black people as the "other."

White-Centrism

Scholars from the experiential-racism framework argue that this form of racism delineates, "who is central and who is marginal" (Essed, 1991: 193). The historical physical separation of the two groups has been maintained and legitimized by an ideology that creates for White people a notion that they are the "core" of American society, thereby forcing minority groups to the periphery.

White People as the Normative Group

Thirty-six (72 percent) respondents discuss how they realize that they work for traditionally White controlled institutions in which they are considered outsiders. Ironically, positive experiences of advancement within agencies often allow respondents to understand the nature of race relations in policing. The following discussion echoes comments made by most respondents:

I was the first Black female person to go to the D.A.R.E. unit. I was the first Black female person to go to internal affairs. I was the first Black in sex crimes. I had an opportunity to go to robbery, I would have been the first Black female there. I've been asked because of the way that I do my work and investigate my cases, I've been asked and turned 'em down, I've turned down a job in homicide and I would have been the first Black there. (22)

Most respondents share similar experiences as the first Black person in an all White agency or department within an agency. Genderized racism further works to keep Black women from the positions within agencies that some Black men fill.

As these respondents move through the agency, they become increasingly aware of the rarity of Black people occupying these positions. The normalcy of White further, therefore, translates into perceptions of Black officers' capabilities to adequately perform required tasks. Another female respondent illustrates:

I was the first African American female sergeant, so there had never been one. So no one even knew whether there was anybody who could do that particular job in this department, so I felt like, at the time, the administration was just sitting back waiting to see how successful I would be, not as a new sergeant, but as an African American female sergeant. (14)

Historically marginalized from positions of authority, Black people who finally occupy these positions are closely scrutinized and have to demonstrate to White observers that they can, in fact, perform required tasks. If not, their failure is generalized to the capabilities of other Black and/or female people and serves to reinforce ideological notions of White superiority, thereby legitimizing them as the societal norm. However, Black people who do succeed do not necessarily pave the way for others, but instead find themselves used as examples that only a few Black people are capable of performing required tasks and/or that there is no racial problem.

Tokenism and "One Good Black"

Specific Black officers who penetrate positions normally occupied by White officers receive attention

disproportionate to their actual function within the agency. Fourteen respondents (28 percent) describe how they are used to give the impression that the agency is progressive and attempting to address past racial injustices:

At the time I was the only Black female at the sheriff's office. I was the only one to do Black perspective, Black female perspective. Interviews, everything fell on my shoulders and they used me royally, so, but you know, there's a positive when you're being used, people start recognizing your name and you gain power and that becomes a problem. (20)

This individual power is only problematic if the Black officer is outspoken on important issues. White dominated agencies, therefore, must be careful that Black people allowed into positions normally occupied by White people are ideologically compatible. One respondent maintains, "what [they] want, [they] want a Black that is safe" (25). Respondents illustrate that, aware of threats to their ideologically hegemony, White officers carefully screen, monitor and control the "token" Black officers who may advance to powerful and/or public positions. Part of this process of control requires that White people (re)define this particular Black person as good and intelligent. This serves the dual function of legitimizing racist barriers in light of one successful Black person--s/he alone is capable--and further attempts to coerce the Black person into thinking that s/he is, in fact, better than other Black people. One respondent describes his experience with this definitional process:

The classic term you used to hear all the time for Blacks when the Whites would want to credit a Black for being somewhat intelligent or more than what they expected, "Well you're not like the rest of 'em.'" (27)

Similarly, respondents note how this definitional process is extended to White officers in an attempt to make sure they are ideologically compatible with notions of White superiority. Respondents discuss how many White officers are supportive and fight against overtly racist practices. However, agencies screen White officers to make sure that the ones who express sympathy for the plight of minority groups are excluded. One respondent discusses his agency:

They see a lot of good White officers coming through there and right away they got to figure out a way to get rid of 'em. That's the mentality and that's where the racism come in. See, you gotta find that certain breed that's gonna stick with the Klan, you know. This guy that we know that's gonna follow the so called tight rope, you know, the Gestapo type guy, they want to keep him." (44)

The existing racial hierarchy is, therefore, reinforced by defining the two groups as different and maintaining these differences as normal by excluding both Black and White people who may challenge these notions and work to change them. As with Black officers, White officers defined as a problem face a perpetual, complex process of (re)definition and (re)socialization designed to force them to conform to dominant expectations or quit. For example, one respondent discusses how White officers who agree to

ride with Black partners report finding their daily lives more difficult:

Actually the people who had the problems were the White officers who said, "okay, I agree to ride with you." So they became Nigger lovers...whereas, hey, as soon as I perform my duties I went home to my Black neighborhood, I didn't have the problems, but he had to go back and live with his friends.
(7)

It is important that as the majority group, White people are able to cognitively detach themselves from Black people, dismiss their experiences and overgeneralize the differences and commonalties of Black and White people. Defining themselves as the norm of society while redefining and/or punishing both Black and White people who challenge this normalcy, the dominant group is able to ideologically legitimize and maintain the current racial hierarchy. However, this cognitive detachment is related to and dependent on, in large part, the continuing physical separation of the two groups. Twenty-six respondents (52 percent) discuss what they experience as and perceive to be continuing patterns of racial segregation in American society, ranging from housing to religion to education and employment, and the impact it has on their lives, the lives of their family members and the lives of all Black people.

Obstacles Impeding Equal Participation

White-dominated institutions have long developed and maintained practices which force Black people to occupy the

subordinate position in America's racial hierarchy. Coupled with ideological notions discussed previously, and to be developed in subsequent chapters, institutional practices serve to marginalize Black people and deny them the opportunity to share equally in the benefits White Americans enjoy. Most of the respondents in this project are talented, intelligent people who have adopted core American values pertaining to individual success and prosperity; therefore, discussions of the barriers they feel that White people have designed to prevent them from getting ahead are particularly insightful into the operation of everyday racism. Despite their middle-class status, relatively high educational attainment and occupational prestige, the majority of respondents discuss continuing racist practices as having a major influence on their lives, the lives of members of their families as well as the lives of other members of Black communities.

Segregation

It is held by many White people that the last vestiges of racial segregation were dismantled as a result of the Civil Rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. These respondents, however, discuss their understandings of the continuing nature of racial segregation in the United States. Most respondents, for example, were raised in, and most still live in, all Black communities:

When you look at 1997, you still have a great deal of African-Americans living in, I wouldn't say segregated neighborhoods, but you would say that they are living in neighborhoods that are not greatly interracial. Okay. So you still have a sort of culture and it's the same with a lot of your White communities. You just look at where your population lives, you'll find that we are still not a totally racially integrated community. (5)

As discussed in the previous chapter and implied by this comment, respondents feel that physical separation, not of their choosing, translates into a development of distinct cultures which do not develop the ability to understand each other. Ideological conceptions of difference remain difficult to overcome when the two racial groups lack direct contact and experiences by which they can identify and overcome the contradictions inherent in racist ideology:

America's still a very segregated society, you know. Look in the churches. The churches are still very primarily segregated. The social clubs are still segregated. There's a little bit of seeds of diversity, but we are still a segregated society. And because of that there's still misconceptions and misunderstandings of each other . . . I quote from a Zin acknowledgment that people are the summation of their life's experiences . . . so if you're unfortunate to be caught up into a little vacuum, then you are what that vacuum is. (29)

As patterns of segregation in housing, in churches and most all formal and informal groupings are persistent, ideology flourishes and White people acting on this ideology continually (re)produce patterns of segregation through their daily actions. One good example is provided by a respondent who tried to purchase a house in a White neighborhood:

I also tried to buy a house off University Blvd. and they talked to me over the phone and for whatever reason did not pick up on the fact that I was Black. But when I showed up in the neighborhood the picture changed. That willing salesman said, "You know, as much as I'd like to, you know, I'd be block busting my neighbors and I'd hate for you to come home one night and something has happened to your family." I said, "I'll be damned. I want to buy a house and someone's going to make subtle threats. So if I have to go through all that I'll take my down payment back, you keep your house." So, I bought in a Black neighborhood. (7)

Experiences such as these add to Black people's general knowledge of racism by the use of comparison--over the phone he was acceptable, in person unacceptable--but more importantly illustrate the attempts of dominant group members to keep Black people in subordinate positions with little room for integration and advancement. It is ironic that an officer paid to keep the public safety has to worry about his family's safety; that an enforcer of laws has no laws on which he can depend to prevent White people from threatening his family.

Another respondent further illustrates the subtle, often unintentional nature of racism. The physical separation of the two racial groups promotes racialized behavior that is not seen as such by the people who are engaged in the behavior. Their actions seem right, natural and comfortable despite the marginalizing consequences faced by Black people:

Because it can cost you in the pocket, it is not so up front. It is very subtly done, subliminal. For example in this department, the chief of police makes all decisions concerning hiring and

promotions. We'd like to think that we have some input in these decisions, but the fact of the matter is that they're his decisions. He's not going to make a lot of changes, because with changes often comes problems and resentment. He wants to do his job without a lot of problems and go on to the next job. The mayor, who appoints the chief of police, is going to appoint somebody that she is real familiar with, and that she can identify with, that is most like her in the ways that they think and idealize alike. And that means if you are very different than she is, then she doesn't really understand you . . . She doesn't know the African American deputy chief. You know, he doesn't get invited to her house, his kids don't go to school with her kids, they don't work together. With the exception of a few community events, they really don't get to understand what we do for the organization over here.(21)

The physical segregation of American society in general is, therefore, (re)produced in police institutions. Despite the best intentions of some White leaders and officers to improve their cities and departments, they (re)produce patterns of racial segregation to the extent that they themselves are separated from and unable to come to know Black people. Further, White people not inclined to consider racism a problem to be solved and afforded protection from the reality of racism by their segregated communities, often choose to act as if Black people do not exist.

Being Ignored

Respondents note how White people accustomed to racial segregation who encounter Black people in social situations turn a cold shoulder to them. Essed argues that this is more than mere indifference, that it, "communicates to Black

[people] that they should not have been in the situation and that they are going to be treated as if they were not there" (1991: 230). Sixteen respondents (32 percent) discuss experiences in which they have encountered this response from White people. The first respondent comments how the reaction depends on whether he is in uniform or not, thereby letting him know the importance of race:

I'm generally well accepted when it's known that I'm a law enforcement administrator, well accepted. Now if I go somewhere and do not identify myself or go just as an African American, then I get the normal semi-cold shoulder or, you know, a good degree of less attention than I get if I identify myself. (42)

However, even in occupational situations with White people who work with them on a daily basis, Black people encounter similar treatment. One respondent notes the overt behavior of a supervisor who went to great lengths to demonstrate that he did not want her working in his section:

I was the first Black female assigned to commissary and accounts in the division of corrections and I got along with my co-workers very well, but I had a lieutenant that was used to an all White department and I felt that he didn't treat me fairly 'cause I felt that I did a very good job in there. He never addressed me by my name, he would come in and he would basically speak to everybody and he never would talk to me. He would come in and maybe mumble something and I can always remember how he would address everybody by name and then he would refer to me as 'whatchamacallit.' And you know, I didn't feel respected that way, I felt that as long as I did my job then he should respect me. (23)

Importantly, this form of racism is not as innocuous as some White people may believe. It communicates dominant

racist ideology making Black people aware of what place in society they should occupy, further it disrupts the daily lives of Black people by making them constantly aware that White people are looking at them as if they should not be there and finally, it serves as a great source of worry and stress particularly if the person ignoring them is the person responsible for evaluating their performance and determining the rate of their advancement.

Avoiding Social Contact

Twenty-five respondents (50 percent) further discuss the importance of White people maintaining their social distance from Black people even though they must work together and rely on each other for support and assistance. Notions that all officers are "blue," implying solidarity, were dispelled by respondents who argue that in the streets all officers may be blue to those being policed, but in the agencies officers are either White or Black:

So, that was a real eye opener for me and after being told in the academy that all the officers are gonna be treated the same and the job was one that once you put the uniform on you became blue. And then when you get out there and you find that, first of all, there was not a lot of socializing between Black officers and White officers. As a matter of fact, I probably went about a year at one time without ever speaking to one other than in a working sense. They went their way and we went ours and that was about it. (9)

The occupational nature of policing is such that respondents maintain it is easier to communicate and identify with other officers. In larger agencies with

greater numbers of Black officers, respondents have people to talk with and rely on. Therefore, the effect of the lack of social contact is greater in agencies where there are few Black officers. These respondents generally describe feelings of hurt and isolation:

But then for years you get a guy, "let's meet, let's go fishing, let's do this." All of these guys were doing so much together off duty, when I didn't have no one to do anything with. Not in a working relationship. And I would like ride around for hours and the other guys would talk on the radio and meet somewhere, and you know, the only way they'd call me is for backup. You know. And these are experiences that I'm talking about. They are not complaints. This is not to judge any of these people. This is just what happened. So, if you put yourself in that situation for about ten years, it can wear on you. It really can. (45)

Riding around all day with no one to communicate with is a very stressful experience. It further illustrates the isolating and marginalizing impact of this form of racism. That White officers are not used to Black officers, do not particularly want Black officers in the agency and do not know how to address them and form a conversation is indicative of persistent patterns of racial segregation in America. A female respondent describes similar feelings:

There's a very good friend of mine, we're both from the department, and she asked me one day, "why do they always bother you?" And I just looked at her, and it just dawned on me she had no concept of why they bothered me, because it doesn't happen to her. You know, they go out and eat lunch together. You know, like buddy buddies, and they're not going to ask me out to lunch. And this is a female. The difference is between a White female and a Black female, and she has no concept of why. And that's my answer to her. Because I am. And that's it. The Sarge would ask her--she and the sergeant would go out regularly.

They wouldn't ask me. I don't mind, because actually I prefer being by myself anyway. But if you ask me, I could possibly go on occasion. But it would never occur to them to ask me. That was a revelation to me, though, because she just doesn't understand. I thought as a female she would understand. But, I keep forgetting I'm a Black female. (8)

The genderized racism in American society creates a unique form of oppression for Black women and they consequently occupy the last rung on the ladder of racial hierarchy (St. Jean and Feagin, 1998). Although all women officers face persistent sexism in police agencies, female respondents continually note the differences between Black and White women officers. Despite their commonality of gender, this respondent feels left out in a way that is impossible for her White female counterpart to understand. due to perceived racial differences.

Segregation, ignoring and avoiding social contact are all forms of racism which daily serve to marginalize Black people in the general society. However, due to the occupational focus of this project and the specialized knowledge of the operation of racism in policing shared by respondents, the rest of this chapter will address how racism impacts policing through the creation and maintenance of racial barriers.

Recruitment

The Civil Rights movement in America has impacted the operation of police agencies as well as respondents' understanding of the specific operation of racism in

policing. EEO guidelines and quotas are used by respondents to describe their agencies and formulate the extent to which the marginalization of Black people remains a problem. Most respondents are aware of, and in agreement with, the notion that police agencies should reflect and be representative of the local population. Most respondents discuss their agencies in terms similar to those in the following comment:

[The] African American population in this town is about 28 percent, depends on who you talk to. It would just behoove the department, it would behoove the community, to be reflected. So, you wouldn't want to have a department with 50 percent Blacks nor would you want to have a department with 4 percent. (15)

However, to the extent that departments are not representative, respondents argue that racism operates to limit the number of Black officers. Half of the respondents discuss the myriad ways in which racism impacts the ability of agencies to recruit members of the Black community to serve as police officers. The first manner refers to the historical oppression of Black communities by police agencies and the knowledge that Black people accumulate about their relationship to police. One respondent discusses how this hurts efforts to recruit young Black people:

A police department is not a profession that African Americans have beat the door down to get into. Now, but if any city is committed to hiring African Americans, you go get them. And the reason that I think African Americans don't beat the door down in police departments is because when they grew up in their under-privileged neighborhoods, the only time they saw the police were when they

came in to arrest their mother, their father, their brother, their sister, their grandmother. All of their experiences, or at least most of them, have been on negative terms. So they were never going to beat the door down at the police department. But you go get 'em. I think most of the very successful Blacks on this department, the department went out and got. (14)

Respondents understand that Black people have been restricted from joining police agencies historically. They, further, are aware that policing is not an occupation that Black people have been historically inclined to fill. However, the above comment notes the necessity of overcoming both of these trends by actively recruiting capable Black people to serve as police officers in their communities.

In addition to the impact of shared notions of policing, structural factors such as social class, level of education and criminal record were cited by respondents as contributing to lower numbers of Black recruits. Education, for example, illustrates some of the contradictions inherent in recruiting:

It's hurting us because a lot of minorities cannot afford to go to college and get a two year degree and if they do, you know, law enforcement is not something that a lot of them want to do if you get a two year degree. I mean, if you go to college and get a degree for something, from an African American standpoint of it, why would you want to go up to be a law enforcement officer? (30)

Having a subordinate role in American society means fewer financial resources with which to pay for a college education. Black people without a college education are not

eligible for police jobs and those with an education may wish to pursue an occupation with greater rewards and less danger. It, therefore, becomes difficult to target potential recruits and then successfully recruit them. However, one Black officer discusses how he was able to develop strategies to successfully recruit Black officers:

When I went to the recruiting section and a total of twenty-seven Blacks in 1987, I felt lonely in the department. When I left after three years we had 107, they told me it couldn't be done. Straight 'A' Black students on campus do not want to be cops. I got 'C' students. You don't need to be a Rhodes Scholar to be a cop, you just have to have good common sense. They went up here, and when they went to these colleges they didn't bother with these people and in essence what they were saying is, they didn't look at this as discriminatory, that Black males, in order to be equal to a 'C'/'B' [White] student, had to be a straight 'A' student. That was bull shit. You know you never get enough so you have to constantly keep recruiting, you have to constantly provide upper mobility career paths for these people and you're not doing anything for them that you are not doing for a White officer. (25)

This type of success story, unfortunately, is infrequent in the discussions. Respondents argue that persistent patterns of racism within agencies impact agencies' willingness to recruit Black people as well as their ability to do so successfully; that agencies have representative numbers of Black officers to the extent they design appropriate recruiting strategies to attract Black people and career paths that promote successful advancement. As in the above example, respondents argue that recruitment strategies must include the input of Black officers in order

to successfully plan recruitment strategies. However, there are relatively few Black officers in positions which are essential to recruiting efforts in many agencies:

They didn't use Black policemen to recruit Black police officers so they wasn't getting any because nobody that he relates to can tell him about the police department. They know that there's not a whole lot of Blacks down there and there has to be a reason for that, okay. It's just common sense if I have a choice that I'm not going where I'm scared of the way that I may be treated. (9)

Low numbers of Black officers in general and specialized positions in particular have the effect of perpetuating the impression in Black communities that agencies are persistently racist. Not having representative numbers of Black officers makes it difficult to attract representative numbers as potential recruits perceive that they are not really wanted. Further, not having Black officers planning recruiting strategy may negatively impact the ability of agencies attract Black recruits.

Members of the Black community further share information about continuing racist practices in police agencies which culminates in policing not being an attractive occupation. For example, if recruits perceive training practices as unfair and decide that they have a limited chance of career advancement in the agency, they are less likely to pursue policing as an occupation. One respondent discusses how a community's awareness of unfair training practices in an agency limits the number of Black applicants:

I was in a meeting about a month ago, two months ago, for the concern with where are the African American police officers. Why, you look all over the State, there's none. It's really hard to get somebody in [this city] because, we're getting a bad reputation in training. I mean, we can train, but we're getting a bad reputation [in the community] when it comes to African American officers being trained. (18)

To develop police agencies that are representative of the racial population of communities is an ongoing struggle. The goal of increasing the number of Black recruits often clashes with the factors that prevent this from occurring successfully and creates contradictions agencies must overcome to achieve a racial balance. Despite studies which show moderate improvement in racial balance by examining large, urban departments (Walker and Turner: 1992), respondents maintain that most agencies are not racially balanced, particularly rural and small town agencies, and discuss the increasing competition for Black officers as one of the reasons why:

The young people that want to be police officers have to pay between 700 and 1200 dollars for the class. Now, a lot of African Americans don't have the money to do that. [So] the sheriff now is actively recruiting African Americans from other police departments. They did it some in the past, but not as heavy as now because we see that shortfall from those classes. So, the thing is, we've got to get guys out there to sell this department for a guy to leave another department. And you got some of these police department guys who don't even make \$10,000 a year. So, to come here and start at \$22,000 and then within less than five years you're up to about \$35,000, you know, see, that's a good chunk of money for a guy. Other departments can't keep officers, because

they train them, and the next thing you know, they're gone. They'll come to work here. (3)

The combination of ideological, structural and departmental factors which limit the ability to attract Black recruits further increases competition for limited numbers of qualified Black recruits. Departments dedicated to achieving racial balance, therefore, often rely on raiding other departments, increasing their numbers but further reducing smaller agencies' racial balance.

Hiring

When agencies successfully recruit Black candidates, despite the factors discussed above, respondents argue that racism still operates to make sure they do not get hired. Twenty-seven respondents (54 percent) discuss barriers to hiring in their agencies. One respondent describes how the complex nature of police administration operates, despite the best intentions of agency chiefs and recruiters, to give racist White people the disproportionate ability to prevent the hiring of Black recruits:

The sheriff says, "Well, you know, we want to do this minority recruiting and hiring." And I really believe him because I'm on the recruitment board and the hiring board as well. But then you have those people in between him and me. They make sure that person that I may have gone out there and recruited doesn't make it. They have a weed-out system in between. He doesn't pay enough attention to that to realize that hey, there's a problem. I know he's busy and has a lot of other things, but that also comes with understanding that people will betray you and people are racist and will discriminate regardless. (20)

Because of the way police administration is organized, respondents often lack direct proof that the "weeding-out" of Black recruits actually occurs. Respondents, therefore, rely on their experience and the use of comparison to evaluate whether racism is really a factor in decisions not to hire Black recruits. One respondent discusses cases that he has concluded were racist:

African American guys that I had known that were brilliant, none of them could pass the entrance exam. I thought that don't sound right. I knew a guy that went to the Air Force Academy and became a fighter pilot, and he went and took the exam and he flunked it. And I knew some [local] boys that passed it, and I thought there's something wrong here, buddy. (46)

To the extent that practices are in place which allow the subjective interpretations of White officers to determine the quality of Black recruits and their ability to perform occupational tasks, racism impacts hiring decisions. Black officers have sued and successfully challenged many of the practices, but often solutions still allow the subjective input of White officers at some point in the hiring process. For example, one respondent discusses how polygraph tests to check the backgrounds of new recruits were adopted to decrease subjectivity, yet furthered racist practices:

The person that does the polygraphs is friends with the chief and the deputy chief. We would have officers come from another police department, and they would fail our polygraph, go someplace else, and pass the polygraph and get hired. And we're not hiring any Black police officers because they

couldn't pass the test, they said. Most of them would pass the test, most of the Black Americans that we were getting in, that we were actually going out and recruiting, had degrees. So they couldn't say that they couldn't pass the test anymore. They were weeding them out in the polygraph. So, but they would go to another police department and get hired. (1)

Most respondents describe a perpetual struggle in police agencies to overcome racism in recruiting and hiring. Often, once a policy or program is determined to be racist and dismantled, other policies and programs are developed which further allow racism to impact the ability of agencies to recruit and hire Black men and women. For example, one program designed to improve the quality of police officers, but discussed by twenty-four respondents (48 percent) as furthering racial divisions in police agencies is the Field Training Program (FTP).

Field Training Program

Respondents' discussions unanimously agree that the police academy is one part of police agencies which is fair and objective. Even respondents trained in the 1960s and 1970s discuss little experience with racism in the academy. However, the Field Training Program is described as an important weeding-out point in which the subjective decisions of White Field Training Officers (FTOs) disproportionately impact Black male and female recruits. As with most other specialized positions within police agencies, there are few Black FTOs. Black officers are, therefore, removed from making decisions which impact both

the quality of officers in general and the racial balance of their agencies. One respondent discusses how, by comparison, he concludes that mediocre White trainees pass the FTP while minority trainees do not:

In training at the academy, everyone is together and getting the same information and you have to pass a test, objective training, they do fine. But when they come out and go into Field Training, where they ride with officers, and some officers have different standards, [there is a problem]. Some [trainees] may have passed the training but that doesn't mean that they are good officers. A lot of those are White males and some White females. (17)

Respondents stress the importance of race in this process over and above other factors such as gender, for example. The agreement seems to be that White officers in training positions share notions that Black people are incapable of performing the required policing tasks or that Black people should not be allowed to be police officers. The result is that disproportionate numbers of Black trainees wash out during this training. A female training officer describes the racialized processes she has experienced as a Field Training Officer:

I've trained White women, and I've seen White women pass the FTO program that no way in hell should have passed. I've had White women that I've wanted to fail, and they've actually come to me and told me I couldn't fail them. No, my administration has told me that. That I couldn't fail them. (1)

Although the power of individual White FTOs to judge recruits and make subjective decisions which affect the

racial balance of departments is considered by respondents to be extensive, discussions such as this one also point out how the agency leadership can direct and influence the decisions of FTOs. The above respondent notes how leadership stepped in to ensure that below average White trainees pass the program. The following respondent maintains how her agency leadership similarly acts to limit the number of Black trainees that pass:

These officers are told to weed certain people out of the program. Sometimes that Black officer or that female officer just says, "to hell with it, this is not for me." And it's because of how they're being treated in the program. They believe this to be true so they just flunk out. (13)

The shared knowledge in Black communities in general and among Black trainees specifically about the disproportionately adverse treatment of Black trainees, therefore, has the effect of adding to the reduction of the number of Black trainees that actually complete the program. Black trainees become disillusioned and frustrated and often may drop out rather than persevere. Another respondent addresses the problem noting the impact of educational differences on the subjective decisions of White FTOs:

Sometimes it can be sexual. Some racial. I see our biggest problem, we lost a lot of Black officers during training, but we don't lose any White officers. We very rarely lose a White officer in training. They may have the same problem as the Black officers, but sometimes they may use that paper and pencil to basically express why a Black officer shouldn't be on department. Ninety percent of Black officers on the department have bachelor's degrees. Now you take 'em and you stick 'em in a car with a training officer that's probably has no more than a high school diploma,

and maybe post-high school police academy and may have a couple of hours in junior college or something, and you cast them out training somebody with a bachelor's degree, sometimes those guys feel threatened. I think they feel threatened. We're having guys with no education, with high school education and maybe some limited college baiting somebody with a bachelor's or master's degree. (18)

The problem of Black trainees being weeded-out in FTPs is, therefore, a multi-faceted problem that operates to (re)produce patterns of racism in police agencies. Limited numbers of successful Black trainees translates into limited numbers of Black officers in agencies which further limits the number of Black officers in specialized position such as Field Training Officers. One respondent sums up this cycle:

I know that racism is there. However, it is not the type that you will be able to draw direct correlation, draw from line to the other, nobody's that foolish. And so when they present a case on a field trainee, it's one that's very little room for interpretation. The only thing that you can do to address some of that would be to have more African American field trainers and there's a paradox in that. You have to get more African American police officers in before you can have more African American trainers. (19)

Fourteen respondents (28 percent) discuss another persistently problematic outcome of Field Training Programs which marginalizes Black trainees. Each of them ultimately passed and were not weeded-out of the program, yet they had to meet additional requirements above and beyond those which most White trainees are expected to meet:

When I first started here, I was going through a one year probation and for nine weeks you're assigned to a training officer, and after going

through my nine weeks, I wound up with one last training officer. And I didn't have any problems with any of them, and that last week, he released me to go solo. And for some reason, this one particular FTO, who doesn't work here anymore, apparently, I heard, put up a fuss about it for some reason and I was assigned to her again, so they extended probation. And no one could really say why. During that time I stayed with that FTO for another month or two. (50)

Respondents, therefore, discuss how racism operates to ensure that FTOs are primarily White officers, how their subjective evaluations and/or agency directives act to weed-out Black trainees, and those who are not weeded out find their career path impeded by having to meet additional remedial requirements. In summary, one respondent, although understanding the lack of direct, causal evidence of racism in agencies, sums up the administrative and economic waste accrued by having such unjust training programs in police agencies:

I don't look at the, the motives, I look at the results. In fact we have a great deal of [trainees] in the program and a lot of them are being weeded out and they happen to be Black. Either there's something wrong with our recruiting program or there's something wrong with the training officers, because why is it that we are hiring so many people that can't make it through the program? I think, again to look at the results, it may be racism, it may not be racism. You're hired 'em, you've interviewed them, you've done background checks, you've tested 'em, you've sent 'em to a training at police academy and now they can't make it through, and that's almost like, I guess five or six months or work, and now you bring 'em to the police department, now they can't make it, something's wrong. So, I would say, hey, you need to, we need to look at our recruiting process or we need to look at our FTO

process. The result is that the end product is not favorable to the money and the time that we spend there. (27)

Biased Evaluation

Building on the theme that racism permeates police agencies to the extent that the subjective decisions of White officers are institutionalized and have a detrimental impact on Black officers, fourteen respondents (28 percent) discuss how both training and performance evaluations serve to limit the ability of Black trainees to become officers and of Black officers to advance in their agencies. One respondent arguing that training should teach policing and not merely critique a trainee's performance comments:

During training these guys get nervous, they may misspell a word, they may leave out a word, give 'em an opportunity to go back and correct their problem. Don't just sit there and say you can't write a police report. I had my sergeant tell me this long time ago, "Write a police report, put it over your sun-visor and then come back and read it after about 30 minutes. You'll find all your mistakes." And I tell my recruits that. When you start talking about, evaluating people's report writing, all that can be, what's that word, it's all basically, what's the word, subjective, it's all subjective. (18)

Respondents feel that White superior officers closely monitor their actions and look for errors which can be blown out of proportion and used to impede their advancement. This fear and insecurity results from the fact that assignment, specialized training, advancement and salary are often influenced by evaluative decisions. Most discuss feeling as

if they are daily subjected to more scrutiny than White officers and spend every moment of everyday under a microscope. Feagin and Sikes (1994) note this process as well and refer to the 'incredible amount of energy Black people waste attempting to deal with this scrutiny while performing their jobs at the same time. One respondent sums up his feelings:

Everybody second guesses us and any time, and it still happens when I write a report. It's, "why don't you charge em with this instead?" You know. I was in a situation, this is what I felt and this is what I render. Nothing is ever good enough. Instead of saying, "Well you did a good job," you know. It's "Well why didn't you do this?" or "Why did you do it that way?" You gotta base it upon what you got, you're there, you know. And it's amazing how people judge you. (20)

Respondents are aware that most officers, White or Black, could have similar experiences or that White people could respond that these types of impressions are common in bureaucratic administrations. One respondent, therefore, discusses how the history of racial oppression, and the shared general knowledge developed by Black people to survive, influence the roles of both Black and White participants in an evaluative process:

So, there's, again, there's a psychological problem, I don't think most Whites face it and they're not aware of it and what I often try to share with most people is when you get a Black and a White, and the White person is in a superior mode and they're evaluating the Black person, and I can only speak for a Black person because I don't know about the other minorities, but the Black person, especially when they're criticized,

the question always comes into their mind, "am I being criticized legitimately or am I being criticized because of a racial mode?" And that's extra baggage. You see, I can't look at the issue and say, "this guy's criticizing me in a direct objective way." It's always in the back of my mind that I got to deal with, "is it really objective or is it racist?" And that's an extra level, a filtering screen that I have to go through and sometimes it's to my own detriment because it doesn't allow me to look at myself objectively. Whereas, you, as another White guy riding with a White guy, if he evaluates poorly, it may be that he doesn't like you specifically, but it's never gonna result to all the White folks don't like you. So you don't have that baggage, you're gonna look at [the situation] and say well, "it's me, I need to do something here or maybe it's a personality conflict between me and this guy," but it never goes to the point that this guy doesn't like White males. (27)

The racialized nature of the American social hierarchy has, therefore, a psychological manifestation. As long as institutionalized practices exist within policing that are not purely objective, the possibility of subjectively racist decisions on the part of White officers and/or the interpretations of an encounter being racist on the part of Black officers will continue to reinforce existing racial divisions in police agencies.

Discipline

Twenty-three respondents (46 percent) further discuss how disciplinary decisions are subjective in nature and operate to (re)produce racism in police agencies. These respondents maintain that in the past and currently, "well, you know, there was two standards there, you know, there

were some things that a White officer could do that a Black officer couldn't dare do and get away with it" (44).

Respondents discuss how popularly projected notions of unity within the police ranks unravel in the face of glaring contradictions over the manners and the extent with which Black officers receive disproportionate disciplinary penalties. One respondent, noting this contradiction, lists recent examples in his agency:

On the surface, I'm blue. They say, "well you're not Black, you're blue. Now you're part of us, you're on the team." But in the real sense, I'm not treated like I'm on the team. Just recently we've got a lieutenant who got caught in the graveyard having sex. They fired him. He's coming back to work here. A Black guy was just talking to a White female and they fired him. Okay. They had a White officer taping a Black male talking to a White female, they fired the Black male because he was talking about sex. But they didn't fire the guy that wired tapped him. They found in an investigation that that was an illegal wiretap, they didn't fire him. He's still working here. We had a police officer that got caught stealing twice. Petty theft the first time, grand theft the second time. Still working here. He used his canine dog as a blind man, got on an airplane and flew as a blind man. He's still working here. But Blacks are being fired for policy violations, which are less--these are criminal charges that these guys are doing. They're still here. Blacks are fired for policy violations--going out on his own, talking on the telephone, not answering calls properly. You know, this kind of thing. Blacks are being fired for these kinds of things. But these guys are still here, because the disciplinary actions for Blacks has been very harsh, more so harsh for lesser offenses, than for Whites. (24)

Black officers share experiences, discuss events and compare the treatment of Black and White officers. They conclude, according to respondents, that Black officers

receive disproportionately harsher penalties than White officers for similar offenses and, further, receive harsher penalties for lesser offenses. Even when White offices are disciplined, they are often informally allowed to make up the money that they would have lost while Black officers do not enjoy the same treatment:

If an African American had of committed that violation, he'd be out the door. A White male would get maybe a week or two suspension demoted, but still allowed to work as much overtime to make up for the economic loss. You know, they might have lost the rank but they still get the money. The buddy system. Their buddies receive better assignments and they go to bat for them. (17)

One respondent stresses that racism does not result merely because institutional practices allow subjective decision making to dominate police agencies. He maintains that subjectively based disciplinary decisions are important to the extent that current practices within police agencies limit the number of Black officers generally and Black supervisors specifically. When Black supervisors are absent, respondents feel that there is no one to monitor and influence the decisions of White supervisors and, importantly, that Black officers are less likely to be evaluated and disciplined by Black superior officers who may evaluate them without bias. Racism influences disciplinary decisions, he argues:

Mainly because the majority of the supervisors are White. You know, that's just the only way you have to look at it. The majority are White so, therefore, you find some of those guys, and I'm

being honest about it, who are very fair and go out of their way to do the right thing. But you're always gonna have some who are not and there's still a few of them around because I've seen instances where Black officers were involved in minor incidents but they paid a higher price than Whites who did the same thing or sometimes even more severe things. (9)

Unfair evaluations and disproportionately harsh discipline, further operate to impact the daily work lives of Black officers by creating the impression that they can never be good enough and will never get ahead.

Discouragement

Eight respondents (16 percent) conclude that White dominated agencies and the White officers in important specialized positions attempt to further marginalize Black officers in agencies by actively trying to discourage them from advancing through the ranks. One respondent relates negative evaluations to this attempt:

And our reports I think were scrutinized more so than the White police officers. So my reports would come back and theirs wouldn't. So I think it was just their way of trying to discourage us. (1)

This form of racism is difficult to measure in both intent and outcome; however, respondents note the historical use of discouragement to limit the advancement of Black officers within police agencies. A current command staff officer discusses how he felt that other officers informally attempted to discourage him from advancing beyond patrol:

I began to desire to be a supervisor and we take a promotional exam every year and then our exam score's good for one year, so the year I was going to take it, I told some of my zone partners, of

course I was the only African American in that, I was riding the rural north end of the county and when I told them I was gonna take the promotional test, they all burst out into laughter and they were really sincere about that being funny. (42)

Although discouragement can still be relatively overt, respondents discuss it as often manifesting as a lack of reward or recognition. A female respondent describes how she has experienced practices which serve to discourage her and other women, "sometimes a female might have done a good job, and they ignored her or, 'you did a good job.' But never rewarded in the form of letters of commendations" (17). A male respondent similarly notes the hurt of being excluded from sharing an award that his White partners received:

I'll put it this way. Two years ago I think they started up the awards recognition program, and I was assigned to a certain detail with four other officers, and the year that they gave out those awards, I was promoted to this position, but those [other] officers were still in patrol. And that night they received recognition for putting a dent in crime on campus, and I was left out of that recognition. I don't know if it was oversight by their supervisor, but someone should have seen or recognized my being one of those four. That kind of bothered me for a while. (50)

Discouragement, therefore, can be a form of racism which marginalizes Black officers by either disciplining them disproportionately harshly or denying proper reward and recognition. Respondents discuss feeling alone, left out and unable to achieve their goals. Comparing their experiences to White officers who receive less discipline and greater recognition culminates in respondents feeling that few White

supervisors want them or care about what happens to them. One respondent describes this feeling of estrangement, "Oh yea, I'm pretty sure that if my neck got on the line that I wouldn't expect my supervisors to come to my rescue. I know if I got in trouble I'm on my own" (12).

Practices which devalue the work of Black officers in relation to White officers are, therefore, shown to promote the marginalization of Black people in general to the extent they are aware of the preferential treatment of White people and develop feelings of low-expectations and self-doubt. Beyond the psychological manifestations of racist practices, institutional barriers such as, what Essed (1991) calls "not acknowledging the qualifications and contributions" of Black officers, result in limited opportunities for advancement.

Assignments

Not acknowledging the qualifications and contributions of Black officers takes various forms. It is related to the historical segregation of Black people as well as legitimizing ideologies which stress their intellectual inferiority. Twenty-eight respondents (56 percent) discuss continuing patterns of racial segregation by assignment. This process will be further explored in chapter six as the ethnization of tasks. However, at this point, it is important to note that respondents discuss how officers of the same rank and same experience level may be differentially assigned because of their race:

Assignments in where you worked. Even little things like this guy and I were working the same section of the town, and he wanted to work in the Black part where I was working at, because the girl he was getting ready to marry, worked for a trucking company that was in my area. And so he wanted to be closer down that way. He wanted to switch and he asked me, and I said, "I don't care." Because you know, you're everywhere anyway, but you're just assigned to a certain area. You know. And he was told by the watch commander that if they allowed me to move up to an area that was 50/50 White and Black, then that would be like giving me a promotion. Moving me out of an all Black area, 99 percent Black except for the Whites who worked at the different companies in that area. (35)

In this officer's experience, assignment was based not only by his race, but the prestige of the assignment was determined by the race of the population of the area being policed. Many respondents note how agencies punish officers by assigning them patrol duties in predominantly Black communities, for example. To be assigned a patrol position in a marginally White area is, therefore, a rung further up the prestige level and can affect the possibility of future assignments and/or promotions.

A female respondent, further, emphasizes the importance of race in determining assignments by comparing her treatment and the obstacles she encounters with that of White female officers:

There's still a difference between White women and Black women. As women as a whole, we catch hell when it comes to promotions, when it comes to job assignments, when it comes to the way we're treated. But White women are still treated better than us in the police department. Don't get me

wrong, White women are treated like shit now, but I'm still saying compared to the way they treat Black women, White women still get the better treatment. [For example] if I apply for a job assignment, and a White female applies for it, a White female is probably going to wind up getting the job. Absolutely. She will, over an African American male. Oh, absolutely. The White woman still is going to be treated different than us. In terms of job assignments, in terms of the way they're rated on their evaluations, in terms of the way they're treated by their White male counterparts. (1)

Although White female officers are treated badly relative to White males, at least at this agency, they are treated better than all Black officers. The racial hierarchy (re)produced in all agencies examined in this project finds White males at the top and Black females at the bottom. Depending on the collective strength of Black officers at a particular agency and the views of departmental leaders, the position of White females and Black males vary between the second and third rungs. This applies to assignment within one division as well as assignment to more important, prestigious divisions within an agency.

Specialized Assignments

Respondents discuss another manner of not acknowledging the qualifications of Black officers is their exclusion from specialized assignments within the agencies. As previous discussions have illustrated, Black officers are generally excluded from important specialized assignments such as FTOs. One respondent comments on the depth of racial divisions which occur in his agency:

Its easier for the Black officers to go to drug related units then say homicide which is like an exclusive position on the police department. One other unit I would say is a barrier for this agency is canine positions. I don't know that if ever in the history of this department we had a Black canine handler. (28)

The exclusion of Black officers from these positions allows racism to be (re)produced in agencies in multiple ways. Exclusion itself is a form of racism that becomes even more important in that newer officers lack mentors and supervisors who can help them understand the positions and eventually perform the required tasks. It further impacts Black community members who have to deal with White dog handlers who may be more aggressive, or White detectives who may be less sympathetic. Another is the fostering of an exclusionary "good old boy" division which shares an understanding about the expected place and treatment of Black people in their community and in their department and informally works to exclude Black officers from joining the division:

We've got one canine Black officer, we have none in homicide, none in marine patrol. We have certain areas that are just not attractive to Blacks and that unseen clique is there that not only does the Black not have the experience, he doesn't want to pursue it because he knows it's a closed door. And he wouldn't be embraced if he were selected, all right, and there's no way, as an administrator, that you can change the way that people think. For instance, I get selected to go into homicide, but the guys don't talk to me and sergeant comes in, "You gotta start speaking to this guy" and they say, "Oh, hello John" and then that's it, you know, so, it's those kind of things and there's really nothing you can do about that. (29)

It is essential to note that informal, subtle patterns of racism do not show up in statistical analysis and even the best administrators and reformers with the best intentions cannot effectively control subtle forms of racism which act as barriers to the ability of Black officers to receive important assignments.

Exclusion From Special Training

A final manner by which the qualifications of Black officers is not acknowledged refers to differential placement in specialized training programs which prepare officers for assignment to specialized positions and general advancement within police agencies. One respondent discusses how her agency excludes Black officers from training despite their petitioning of agency leadership for inclusion:

The White males and the White females would get to go to training, and we African Americans didn't get to training. They would say no funds. Most of the time they would ignore your memorandums. You would send them upstairs, and you would never hear anything about them. And training positions. We didn't have any Blacks in training positions. Working as trainers, and we still don't have any Blacks working as training, so that's till fifteen years later. (1)

Although this respondent successfully sued, thereby legitimizing her interpretation of racialized training opportunities, as of the time of the discussion only one Black female was allowed to go to a specialized training and no Black officers were promoted to positions as trainers. This illustrates the dual nature of racism perpetuated by

this practice--few Black trainees and trainers. This continually acts to (re)produce the notion of White as the norm which further marginalizes Black officers:

The supervisor may have had a long-term friendship with this individual, they may feel comfortable talking like that around them and [when] these opportunities arose for them to send someone to special training classes, these special schools, they would send the people that they've known all their life and were comfortable with. Then here are these African American and female troopers over off to the side going, "Same old system, good old boy system, they're not sending me because I'm Black or because I'm a female" or whatever the case may be and that's clearly the way it would appear, clearly the way it would appear. (42)

Although the decisions of supervisors may be racially motivated, respondents repeatedly discuss how segregation and racial isolation reinforces ideological notions which promote racism as natural. Since White officers are used to being around White people they may arrive at decisions which are unintentionally exclusionary and further patterns of racism and sexism:

Leaders chose those that are most like themselves. There are few African Americans in decision making positions. Therefore, African Americans don't get specialized trainings or positions. Experience helps promotions, the more jobs you do, the better able you are to understand the questions on exams and get a better score; to practice doing what the book says and study for promotional exams. (21)

Intentional and unintentional racism by White agency leaders and supervisors clearly (re)produce racist patterns and practices within police agencies. The inability of Black officers to go to specialized trainings and work in

specialized positions, this respondent maintains, serves to inhibit their ability to gain necessary knowledge and experience which will allow them to perform well on promotional exams and, therefore, limits their advancement within police agencies. The lack of Black leaders and supervisors then serves to (re)produce this pattern as Black officers lack mentors and supervisors who care about and understand them and, importantly, are willing to assign them to specialized trainings and assignments that will prepare them to be the future leaders of the agency. As one respondent states, "Sometimes people go unnoticed because there is no one up there that makes them notice you" (17).

Exclusion from Positions of Authority

Most respondents report that the practice of not acknowledging the qualifications and contributions of Black officers ultimately serves to exclude them from positions of authority. Thirty-eight respondents (76 percent) express concern about the barriers which Black officers face to advancement. Respondents discuss how the subjective evaluation of Black candidates in the past served to limit promotional opportunities. Many respondents recount overtly racist practices which excluded Black officers from supervisory and command positions. One respondent comments, "I've had supervisors say, 'I don't know why ya'll Black

guys take this test anyway because if you pass, we're not gonna promote you anyway" (44).

After, multiple lawsuits, however, many of these practices were dismantled in many agencies and new promotional processes put in place. It is consequently commonly held that current promotional practices are fairer and colorblind. However, respondents discuss various manners in which they are still differentially denied promotion. One respondent from a small rural agency discusses the difficulty of being promoted despite superior performance:

We had a promotion exam, Ken, I don't want to be given anything because I'm Black. But I don't want things to be taken away from me because I'm Black. I scored the highest on the written exam. I scored the highest on the oral exam and still it took my ex-chief longer [to promote me] than it took him to promote anybody. (45)

Five other respondents (10 percent) have been officers for more than twenty years and have either never been promoted, or not promoted in a very long time, because, they report, they are very outspoken about issues of racism in policing. One of these respondents describes his experience:

I've faced a lot of opposition toward promotion. I've been up for lieutenant eleven times and I've been passed over even though I've passed every exam. I have been denied transfers. I was just recently transferred back to (an old post) where I have people who are my junior, people that I had recruited that have been promoted and that are now my supervisors. They have less education, they have less time in grade, they have less experience as an officer, but now they're my supervisors. So, I've faced much opposition, simply because I'm very outspoken and I deal with all the issues in society; I deal with a lot of issues involving

police and race; I deal with a lot of issues involving police and Black male conflict. (24)

To the extent, therefore, that the subjectivity of White officers impact promotional process, patterns of racism are persistent. One solution to racism in the promotional process was the creation of assessment centers which use a multi-stage process of determining officer suitability for promotion. However, respondents argue that at least one of the assessment stages just substitutes one form of subjective evaluation for another. Therefore, Black officers in general and Black officers defined as outspoken can be weeded out of the promotional process:

We eliminated the evaluation and just started doing [a process] where you take the test and then go through the assessment center, but the fact is, at the assessment center . . . sergeants ended up pretty well being the graders of everything. (32)

Respondents report that Black officers who do well on objective, written exams are often hurt by the subjective evaluations of White sergeants. Further, extra-departmental factors such as income and class impact the ability of Black officers to prepare for these very intensive exams:

Another problem I have with the assessment process is that if you don't spend a lot of money, you don't make it. My brother spent \$1,000.00 on the last one and I spent \$800.00 just for a two day course to prepare for assessments. And you have to spend money. I've got friends that have done very well on a written exam, but they got three and four kids and a house, a car, and they can't afford to fork out \$3,000.00 and \$4,000.00 for a sergeant's exam. (18)

The necessity of Black officers in supervisory and command positions and the relative lack of Black officers in these positions is a continuing topic of concern in both police agencies and the communities. Often members of the Black community openly push for greater representation at the command level. White people often respond that promotional criteria is objective and fair and that only the best officers advance. This debate often negatively impacts the self-image of Black officers who, after repeated attempts to advance, lose motivation and settle into positions for life. Similarly, command officers and supervisors are negatively impacted as they constantly feel the need to explain and justify their promotion to critics. One respondent's discussion illustrates the complex nature of his promotion and the effect it has on him as an individual:

When I got promoted to detective. The city was under duress because of the inequity of numbers of people that they had. Now granted, I was qualified for the job, but they would not have looked at me for the promotion without the outside pressure. They would not have looked, there was no need for it because again, they had at least ten White guys who were just as qualified for the job. And so unless there was something to make them look at me, you know, consider me, I wouldn't have gotten that promotion. And again too, I had only been in my slot for like I think three or four years, and as I said, I'm not a fool, I mean, the only reason they looked at me was because of the affirmative action, they were looking for someone, the community was raising sand about inequities of the disproportionate numbers of minorities they have in these management positions and so they look

around. They said, "Well, we need to promote somebody. It just so happens that [he] is qualified, he's doing a good job, hasn't caused anybody any problems and da-da-da-da," and so there he is. (27)

Although qualified, this respondent notes how past notions and practices conspire to limit his advancement. Placed in a promotional pool with other officers of equal qualifications, there would be no reason for anyone to promote him. He is, therefore, thankful for community outcry and policies such as Affirmative Action which give him the opportunity for advancement, although he continually feels the need to apologize for this advancement. Other respondents discuss how, contradictorily, past racist practices and present Affirmative Action policies combine to limit the advancement of Black officers by creating informal quotas:

You have a list of people. If you have a promotion, my name is on the list, and I only get looked at when you need to promote an African American or promote a woman. You gotta be looking at me every time you look at that promotion list. That's the way our system, our Department is geared, I mean there is a promotion list, everybody's name is on it, but I know past practice has been where you were put in a category over here and pulled out when there was a particular need if no woman or no Black retired, then you might not necessarily get that promotion because they're saying there's no need to replace. You're looking at numbers, there's no need to replace one who left because nobody left. And the, the qualities that really matter about the person are secondary. (14)

Black officers are, therefore, often only promoted when another Black officer retires or moves up. In this way, artificially low numbers of Black command staff are maintained. Further, respondents note how many agencies make promotional policies far more difficult for the first promotion to sergeant further complicating a promotional process dominated by subjective evaluations and informal quotas. One respondent describes how this process operates at his agency with union, and, therefore, minority officer complicity:

But only with sergeants is this prohibition in here that says, "oh no, you gotta pick from this group or that group." The consequence of that is you won't be a lieutenant and you won't a captain if you aren't first a sergeant. So you have to first get that first promotion and the way the system has been implemented in these agreements between the union and the city, so there's a 50/50 partnership there, it has allowed the promotion for sergeant to be the hardest promotion to get for anybody and the pre-eminent hardest promotion for Blacks or Hispanics to get by its design. (26)

The difficulty in being promoted to sergeant, thereby, limits the numbers of Black officers eligible to be promoted to higher command positions. The net effect is the limits on Black leadership in agencies. Many respondents express fear that the future of Black leadership in their agencies is in doubt due to the present lack of Black sergeants:

I have expressed this with my bosses, I find it totally unacceptable that in 1997 there's only seven I think, seven or eight Black sergeants. In 1985 there were five. (26)

The result of this struggle for limited numbers of supervisory and command slots impacts Black officers and the future of policing in various important ways. First, respondents from thirteen of the sixteen agencies included in this study describe a slow or non-existent growth in the numbers of Black sergeants in their departments and discuss how few Black patrol officers are currently eligible or ready to take the sergeant's exam. This translates into limited numbers of Black sergeants who can be promoted to command positions in the future.

Respondents note, therefore, that the gains in the numbers of Black supervisors and command staff made in the 1980s are at risk and that when current, older Black leaders retire, there will be an even greater lack of Black leadership in police agencies. Further, respondents at one of the three other agencies currently enjoy a number of Black leaders but understand that, due to the fact that these positions are appointed by the current chief/sheriff and not civil service, a change in leadership could wipe out a number of Black officers in these important positions:

We've got a Black sheriff now. The most he can serve is one more term. I don't know if we'll have a Black sheriff next time. So, with a new sheriff, all of these are appointed positions, so its possible that in an election, they'd all be wiped out. (15)

Secondly, ten respondents (20 percent) argue that limiting the numbers of qualified Black officers combined

with practices which weed-out outspoken Black officers results in the perpetuation of racism by lowering the standards by which Black officers are promoted. This results in less qualified Black officers advancing just to fill an informal quota and maintain the appearance that the agency is actively combating racial injustice:

I think a lot of the problem has been [that agencies] need a Black so let's just put so and so in it, not whether or not they're really qualified. And that kind of, that's what's helped promote this perception that, you know, they're just giving me a job. I mean, every job or transfer I've got, [people have said] it was given to me because I was Black or a female. (41)

Promoting under-qualified Black officers to vital command positions reinforces White notions of Black intellectual inferiority by ensuring that they will fail. Further, the psychological damage to the Black officer extends to other Black officers by (re)producing notions of incompetence and legitimizing barriers to Black officer advancement. One respondent argues that the intention of this practice is to perpetuate racism:

My thing is that if you're gonna do a promotion you want to try to promote the best qualified individuals for the job. If there are African-Americans that are included within the process, yeah, that makes you more of a diversified agency, but when you start just going and just pulling one, even [when] you look back at the old Good Old Boy system that's the way it was done . . . You're gonna need someone who's qualified. You're gonna need someone who can make the right decision out there in the field and I think you're doing a greater disservice. (5)

A final result of the limited ability of Black officers to advance within their agencies is increased competition and fragmentation among Black officers and less collective solidarity. Given limited number of positions, realization of these limitations and the rewards accrued by officers who attain those positions, it is not surprising that competition is often fierce. One female respondent describes her impressions:

I felt like she was a threat to me; I was a threat to her. First of all, we don't have many African-American females at all in our department. I think that only four, well one got terminated just a few months ago. So there's really only three and one lieutenant African-American female. I'm a threat to her because believe it or not, it's reality, I would probably get promoted before she would and that's what she was thinking. (13)

Interestingly, only female respondents discuss this phenomena. Apparently, the genderized racism which they encounter exaggerates the level of competition they feel they are in for an even fewer number of supervisory and command positions. Further, to the extent that they are even more marginalized than Black male officers, they feel increased levels of competition from them as well. One respondent colorfully describes this fierce competition as "crabology":

Ignorance, afraid that someone else would do a little bit better than them. In the Black neighborhoods, they call it "crabology," the crab effect. When you put crabs in a bucket and one tries to go up to the top, another crab will pull it down. But, you know, if you look at a crab in its natural environment, if you put crabs on the beach, they would spread out and go different ways . . . The Black person that makes it over the

wall, should reach back or throw the rope over. But what happens, they throw the walls up higher. Yeah. They want to stay the king pin because they're scared somebody else will pass them . . . In law enforcement I have seen very few women that back other women. They are more prejudiced and biased than men. You have just a few that will back each other, support each other, because they're so busy trying to move up the ladder and get the blessings from the guys that they step on the other females. They create confusion. They forget where they came from. They think there's not enough room there. (20)

Persistent racist notions and practices serve to limit the advancement of Black officers in various manners, many of which have already been discussed. Despite perceived gains resulting from collective action on the part of Black officers, lawsuits and Affirmative Action programs, the future of Black command staff, particularly Black female command staff, is tenuous at best. Those who have advanced face numerous problems such as critiques of their abilities and the possibility that they will be replaced after the next election. Furthermore, while trying to make command decisions and supervise their subordinates, many Black leaders face attitudes, behavior and practices which undermine their authority.

Ignores Authority

The history of Black police in American society is one of contradictions fostered by racial differences. These contradictions become clearer when examining the authority vested in the police occupational role versus the lack of

authority Black officers have had relative to White officers. Twenty respondents (40 percent) discuss experiences with this form of racism at some point in their career. Black officers in the 1960s were counseled by their supervisors as to the extent of their authority:

"Boy, now I want you to go out there and do a good job, but I don't want you putting your hands on no White people out there. Now, you call another White officer in there. I don't want you putting your hands on them. I don't want no problems," is what the old Chief said. (39)

Patterns of segregation prevalent in American society were thus (re)created within police agencies on a daily basis. The effects on Black officers included providing them insight into American racism while learning that they were expected to remain in subordinate position relative to all White people. Black officers who did not sufficiently internalize that message were taught their error of their ways:

It bothered the heck out of me when I caught a young White man in a Black community turning donuts and driving in a careless manner. I stopped him, wrote him several tickets, two for careless driving and all that. He called someone . . . I was directed to go back out and pick up the tickets and tell the young man that I apologize for giving him those tickets and apologize to his family when I was right. Now that, that one got me. (7)

Such experiences were certainly embarrassing for Black officers and lowered their prestige in the eyes of both the White and Black public. The ordinary stress of the police occupation was multiplied by such humiliations and often resulted in low self-esteem and doubt. Respondents comment

that they began to wonder if they could be leaders and if their subordinates would respect them. One respondent discusses why he never pursued advancement in his agency:

I'm not sure I would be seen as viable or have the same opportunity. I look at the fact that because the majority of the agency will be White males, they may not cooperate with me if I were a supervisor. (41)

Black women entering policing well into the 1980s faced similar concerns about their ability to lead, "There are still some males that do not believe that females belong in law enforcement, there are people that do not want to be supervised by women nor do they want to be supervised by a minority" (17). Both race and gender interact in such a way to limit the authority of Black female officers in relation to White and male officers who do not see them as police officers or feel the need to accept their leadership.

Other respondents' discussions illustrate that the fears of Black and female officers, unsure of whether they would be accepted as leaders, were justified. Many describe patterns of disrespect, insubordination and attempts to undermine every vestige of their authority:

[The other officers] under me would circumvent me and go around me. Their reports would come late and [they would] take it and turn it into another sergeant or turn it in to the lieutenant. They didn't want me checking their paperwork, some of them, not all, I would say . . . well a squad's 15, so I probably have 3, 4 that would go somewhere else. (31)

White subordinates, well versed in the ideologies of racism and familiar with racist practices often go out of their way to demonstrate to their Black superior officers that they do not recognize their authority. Respondents recognize that not following orders is clearly racially motivated once they experience White officers willfully demonstrating that their actions are meant to communicate notions that Black social subordination outweighs White institutional subordination:

Their actions more than just words. You can tell when they do things. I have worked side by side with some other officers whose supervisor was White and he'd tell him to do it and he'd go right on and do it. OK? But when I became the leader of this tribe, I could tell the same officer to do something and he would take his time about doing it, and say give me a little bit of time, I've got to do this and I've got to do that. But basically he wouldn't be doing anything, he'd just be trying to show me up. (43)

However, to demonstrate that these are not merely the actions of a few individual racists, respondents discuss the ways in which their superior officers accept and prolong insubordination. One respondent recounts how the actions of his captain undermined his ability to discipline his men and ultimately culminated with him being disciplined by the same captain:

I wound up getting a letter of reprimand in my jacket for failure to supervise my men properly and that, they say that was another straw that hurt me when it came time for promotion, not being able to supervise your people. How can you supervise your people when people are not working with you to supervise your people? (44)

Beyond supporting the actions and attitudes of insubordinate White officers, White supervisors and command staff can undermine the authority of their Black counterparts in other manners.

Withholding Information and Deception

Thirteen respondents (26 percent) discuss how withholding information and outright deception are often used to marginalize them in their agencies by undermining their ability to lead. The most common form of withholding information is referred to by respondents as not inviting Black command staff to "the meetings before or after the official meetings." One respondent echoes the experiences of many Black leaders, "They would have a meeting there with me and then they would have the real meeting" (11).

In order to survive, respondents note that they have to learn two parts of one important lesson. First, do not trust White officers because they are not always who they appear to be, "and one thing that we knew and that I learned right off the bat is White officers' conduct was different when you were around than it was when you weren't" (9). Secondly, be careful of what you say and do around White officers; guard your opinions carefully:

That's why part of the reason there aren't many African Americans in the department, they don't know who to trust, I don't know who to trust. We live in a dog eat dog world and information is the thing that is used to accomplish certain things and we very much have to watch what we say. You

might feel a certain way, but the truth will not help you out. (16)

Black officers who naively believe in the fellowship of police officers and feel that blue is blue lack the specialized knowledge of racism in policing necessary to survive. Older, more experienced Black officers report efforts to teach and guide younger officers, but note that experience, if one survives, often opens the ears of younger Black officers and allows them to listen and understand for the first time. One respondent recounts a nearly terminal experience that destroyed his naiveté:

Well, I had an experience that hurt me so and I just couldn't believe that things like this could actually happen. Now you read about things like this and you see things in the movies, but when these kind of things start occurring and happen to you, you know, personally, that's when you say, "I don't believe this, how could a person lie and say some of the things like they were saying." To give an example, I was a detective working at a homicide and robbery and I thought at that time I was doing an adequate job and my end of the month statistics showed that I was surpassing a lot of the White detectives and was doing a good job. A White detective from a different division came up with a scenario that I supported a known felon or criminal, drug addict in the robbery and he went forward with this and he got enough people's attention that they really thought that I had done this and they investigated me as though I was a criminal. I was exonerated from this, nothing ever happened to them. But now if I had done something like that, they'd have probably put me in jail or fired me. (44)

Cases such as this, according to respondents, demonstrate the extreme lengths White officers will go to undermine the authority of Black supervisors and destroy

their credibility. However, other manners have proven more subtle and just as effective.

Secondary Facilities

Fourteen respondents (28 percent) discuss how they are reminded of their subordinate position in society and the agency by being assigned secondary facilities within the department. Officers describe receiving outdated tools, worn out cars and offices in the corner of basements where no one will ever see them. One outspoken officer describes how secondary facilities are spatial manifestations of White officers' notions of their place in policing:

OK. If you notice the location in this building, it's in a hole, no windows, no doors, it's like a closet. You've got to come all the way to the back of the place to find it, to the back of the police department to get here. OK. They ostracize you, isolate you, separate you from the general public. They don't communicate with you, the flow of communication to me is nothing. They always want me to go up to them and communicate, but they don't bring information back down to me, so I'm at a loss. If I didn't hear anything from other people in other sections, I wouldn't have any information at all. Because my superiors don't talk to me, you see what I'm saying, they won't even talk to me. (24)

Pay and Benefits

The subordinate position of Black supervisors and command staff is reported by respondents to be reflected in pay and benefit differentials. Older respondents discuss how receiving far lower pay and benefits for the same work was common when they began in the 1960s and 1970s:

[Another Black officer] called me and came by my house and took me to his house, and he told me there was a Black salary for police officers and there was a White salary for police officers and it was going to remain that way. That was a Saturday and the very next week I went and asked for a appointment to see the chief and when I went up there I said, "chief I hear there is a Black salary and White salary for police officers." He didn't deny it at all. (38)

Due to the collective actions of Black officers and policies enacted to formalize pay standards, respondents argue that this is no longer a problem. However, two respondents from very small, rural agencies maintain that their salaries still reflect their race and report that even subordinate officers earn more than they do. One discusses how he understands pay differential as a manifestation of racism:

When they demoted me from police chief back to patrolman, they were giving the person that they put in the position more money as a patrolman, than I was making as police chief, and you think that's no racial motive. (43)

Although beyond rural, isolated agencies pay differential seems to have ceased, nine respondents (18 percent) discuss how other racially motivated processes can hurt Black officers financially. The above respondent from a rural agency discusses how a racially motivated demotion reduced his salary making it harder to support his family:

I wanted to bring [an officer] over as an officer because I worked under him as a deputy sheriff . . . So it happened, he led so many different stories and conspired against me [that on] April 14, the councilmen, we had a new set of councilmen, they gonna make a change without giving me a just cause reason and explanation. I asked them for both,

give me just cause, give me explanation. Not only did they demote me April 14, they took \$129.00 a week from my salary. (43)

Although few interviews were conducted with Black officers from rural agencies, this finding seems consistent with the findings of Bass (1995). While examining only White officers, he argues that smaller police departments compared to the larger ones are more likely to have their law enforcement priorities and style of policing influenced by members of the local communities. Bass illustrates how officers police in a manner acceptable to those with power and influence in the community or they can be dismissed from the job. Minorities can be seen as outsiders and either arrested or ignored depending on particular circumstances. In this case, the Black chief reports that he was summarily demoted. This finding is important in that, although smaller agencies receive little scholarly attention, over half of all municipal police agencies are made up of one to ten officers.

Another respondent discusses how an injury was evaluated as not job related and cost him a large percentage of his pension although a White fireman suffered a similar experience and received more of his pension. He concludes that had he been White, the judgment would have been more beneficial to him:

I got injured in the community relations part where I was trying to bridge a gap between the

community and the police department and you guys don't want to accept that. If you don't want to accept that, I really don't understand what your problem is. You don't want to accept. And based on my attorney, I kind of listened to him. Now he was a lawyer that had, he was a specialist when it come down to going up against the pension. He have had all kind of cases against White officers where you felt that he would lose and he won. He had never lost a case against the pension board, but mine he lost. Here the pension attorney told him that [I] got 99 2/3's chances of winning his case and I lost. And the same ruling that I lost on, there was a White fireman, I got the documentation and all that, he was granted his 65 percent for the fire department, but I was granted 35 percent, 32 1/2 percent from the police department and the cases were identical. (44)

Pay differentials in salaries, and pensions, as well as the loss of pay resulting from disciplinary actions, work to undermine Black officers, marginalize them in relation to White officers and reinforce their subordinate positions in police agencies.

Retirement

The end result of the myriad barriers to the advancement of Black officers and the problems that those who have advanced encounter, is often early retirement. Ten respondents (20 percent) discuss how their agencies have seen increases in the numbers of Black officers who leave earlier than necessary due to being forced out of the agency or opting for early retirement:

All the Black officers that left the police department in the last 16 to 20 years were either terminated or forced to resign, or they tried them. They tried me too but I always got me a lawyer. After I got my time in they tried to put

the threats on me they brought me on the inside and do work, they knew I didn't like the work on the inside so they brought me inside and I sat right there and did the work. The White officers if they wanted them to resign they would go and give them a twenty five thousand dollar buy. They would take the twenty-five thousand and their retirement and run. Black officers they would always try and put some pressure on them and say, "we got this one [and] we got you." You have Black officers that have resigned with twenty years experience . . . that is a waste of tax payers money because you have trained them. In the last five years, eight Black officers that has retired and they are not forty years old yet. (38)

The differential treatment of White and Black officers culminates in Black officer flight from some agencies and is reinforced by differences in pensions. Another respondent from the same agency discusses the detrimental ripple effects this phenomenon has on the agency's ability to overcome a history of racial injustice by building a racial representativeness:

Over the last couple of years we've lost 8 of our Black officers to retirement. So 50-60 percent of our Black work force has less than five years. So we don't have but one officer eligible to take the sergeants test this time. Hopefully in 2 or 3 years we'll have some that'll move up in the ranks and move into command staff positions. Although we haven't hired any African American females in the last three years, now compare that with the number of White females and males. (17)

Early retirement creates a shortage of Black supervisors and command staff personnel to represent the views and experiences of the Black communities. Further, younger Black officers have no mentors to teach, support and guide them through the first formative years of service:

Now I think there's a major problem for most of the young Afro American officers, don't have anyone to go to because most of the senior officers pretty well retired and from what I can gather, you know, I was talking to one of the rookie officers about two weeks ago, and he's already contemplating leaving because he feels like the problems have worsened down there. (32)

These discussions do not paint a picture of improving race relations in police agencies but, rather, illustrate the nature of racism as persistent and complex. Most respondents agree that through continually pushing White agencies with the collective strength of Black officers can the nature of racism be transformed in policing. However, organizations which represent the interests of officers are also (re)produce patterns of racism.

Police Unions

A final form of marginalization which ten respondents (20 percent) discuss is the persistent racial divisions which exist in police unions. To the extent that unions are designed to serve the interest of their members, the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and the Police Benevolent Association (PBA) have historically served the interest of White members which, intentionally or not, has allowed entrenched racist ideologies and practices to be perpetuated. Many respondents discuss how, although they are members of a union, they have no real voice and feel as though they are completely overlooked. One respondent discusses how these feelings culminated in Black officers taking collective action to get representation:

The union was putting some proposals on the table that would adversely affect Blacks and, of course, promotion is always a big one. I think sometimes as Black officers, you're taken lightly because there's not that many of you. So, we pretty much launched the campaign that we would pull out of the PBA and go with the FOP and that's exactly what happened and the PBA lost our contract, and which the FOP now has. And I mean even now, you know, every four years we go through out contract agreements and we have to make it clear that we are supportive of the union, however, if you pass or support policy that adversely affects African Americans, we're not gonna be a part of it. (14)

Only by careful monitoring and timely pressure can Black officers collectively ensure that the police union(s) will back issues of interest to them. Many officers have responded by joining Black unions which promote officer unity, express issues of concerns for Black officers and provide aid for Black communities. This continuing split between the perceived interests of Black and White officers which is manifested in the structure and daily operation of police unions is, therefore, further indicative of the entrenched nature of racial divisions in America.

Summary

Responding to those who argue that racism in policing is a myth, one respondent describes how Black officers talk about her agency, "we say, 'that's the police department that's ten miles down the road and fifty years behind times.' Nothing has changed" (1). In fact, respondents' discussions provide a great deal of support for Essed's notion of "marginalization" which she argues is a form of

oppression in that it serves to (re)produce both ideological and structural barriers which serve to maintain Black people in a subordinate position in American society. Experiences with these barriers allow respondents to understand them as manifestations of everyday racism which illustrates to them that they are unimportant and unwanted.

Discussions demonstrate respondents' awareness of how persistent ideological justifications of racial hierarchy are continually (re)produced. Encounters with racism allow respondents to understand how White people learn about their superior place relative to Black people and how this relationship comes to be accepted as the norm and is shared with other White people. Discussions illustrate that racism is not often recognized by White people as such although it is manifest in their everyday attitudes and behaviors. Racism, for White people is, therefore, accepted as if it were natural. The perceptions and concerns of Black people are dismissed and White people disavow themselves of any responsibility for the state of race relations. Further, exceptions to the hierarchical rule become tokens, are defined as "good Black people," and, although their authority is sometimes ignored by White officers, are used by agencies as evidence that racism is no longer a barrier.

The key factor which enables the persistence of racist ideology is described by respondents as the continuing physical segregation of the two racial groups in both the larger society and in specific institutional settings.

Societal segregation not only makes it difficult for members of the two groups to communicate and uncover the contradictions inherent in racist ideology, it further limits the ability of Black people to advance and change the material conditions of their lives. The inability to receive an adequate education, the lack of adequate housing, the lack of wealth and the shortage of well paying jobs, among other factors, culminate in the daily (re)production of Black subordination. All of these factors work to limit the number of Black people eligible for positions in police agencies and reduce the preparedness of those who are eligible and, therefore, their ability to successfully compete.

The specific nature of racism in policing continually creates barriers which thwart the ability of Black people to enter the profession and advance to specialized position or through the ranks. Respondents cite continuing problems with Black people being recruited, hired and successfully trained. As barriers which weed-out many Black males and females are identified, attacked and transformed, new barriers are developed which perpetuate the marginalization of Blacks in police agencies. Black officers, further, reportedly face disproportionately unfair evaluations, discipline and find it more difficult to be promoted. Despite gains made in the late 1970s and 1980s, respondents posit that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to achieve racial representativeness in police agencies due to

increased agency competition for qualified Black officers, high turnover rates and early retirements due to constant stress caused by differential treatment. Most fear that significant changes in EEO guidelines and/or Affirmative Action could be a serious setback.

Several important themes arise from respondents' discussions. First, although all forms of racism exist in all places at sometime, racism is more frequently experienced as covert and/or subtle in agencies with more Black officers and more overt in rural and smaller agencies with limited numbers of Black officers. Therefore, racism is persistent in policing to the extent it is persistent in the general social structure and to the extent that subjective decision making by White officers, coupled with the lack of Black officers, continues in police agencies. Finally, female respondents uniformly express the genderized racism they encounter, but comment that race is often the more important of the two factors. Their comments frequently illustrate their commonalties with Black males.

Just like we are affected by what we see and experience and our backgrounds, I would think certainly a system that is run by human beings is also affected by their life experiences, their perceptions and, and their beliefs. Certainly I think [policing is] not infallible because it's run by human beings who values and perceptions and beliefs certainly enter into decisions that are made. (14)

Racist belief systems will be examined in greater detail in the following chapters.

CHAPTER FIVE
PROBLEMATIZATION:
DENIGRATION of PERSONALITY, CULTURE and BIOLOGY
ANALYSIS of DATA (PART III)

Introduction

You're looking at a system that's been built up over the years with a philosophy that's been built up over the years and its taught not only in the educational system, on television, in the media. It's all around you and you either subscribe to it because it's the easy thing to do, or actually it's the natural thing to do, or you have to struggle with society and once that struggle, once that fever pitch struggle begins and catches on, I think you'll see some progress, but until that you deal with what you deal with. Can you deal with it? You can. Do you really want to deal with it, do you want to live the rest of your life knowing that you're considered a second class citizen by a lot of people in this country? Many of them you work with or encounter in the community. I don't think that's the way you want to go out. Rather than face those things you'd rather be respected as a man, as a law enforcement officer. (16)

Racism is grounded in the exaggeration and hierarchical organization of difference. This respondent laments not being treated as a person or as an officer, but as permanently "second class" because of his/her race. The experiential-racism tradition posits that for racist practices to occur systematically, there must be certain ideological conditions that both stimulate and legitimize these practices (see, for example, Essed, 1991). The

sensitizing concept of problematization reflects the way ideological notions are manifested in the attitudes of White people who then are able to rationalize the marginalization of Black people from access to material and nonmaterial rewards and legitimize their containment in subservient social positions.

Respondents' discussions provide support for many of the forms of problematization discussed by Essed (1991). The differences, however, appear to be related to this project's focus on one specific occupational setting. Probably because of the nature of policing, the majority of respondents focused on how Black people are criminalized in the US. Further, overt forms of denigration are generally encountered less frequently by officers in many police agencies due to potential legal action. Finally, many of the respondents are shielded by their rank and the power vested in their positions. Despite these factors, however, respondents illustrate the continuing importance of ideological constructs in legitimizing their ill treatment.

Denigration of Perspective/Personality

Respondents discuss how, as Black men and women, they are attributed with personality problems which are used to both explain and legitimize their treatment by White people. Problems in race relations are, thereby, ideologically attributed to Black individuals and not the institutional

processes and White people which seek to marginalize Black people. Racism is removed as a causative concept while the perspectives of those who experience racism most intensely are dismissed.

The Attribute of Unreliability

The experiential-racism tradition demonstrates how Black people are considered partial and, therefore, unreliable as sources of information about race relations and solutions to racial problems. However, perhaps because of this project's focus on the occupation of policing--an occupation imbued with much responsibility--only five respondents (10 percent) illustrate how, because of their race, they continue to be seen as unreliable in the performance of their jobs. One respondent discussed the general distrust of Black officers in the 1970s despite his and others' high level of performance:

I've actually testified in front of the US Senate twice as a crack cocaine and illegal alien expert and worked narcotics for 12 years and have been renowned nationally for some of the techniques that I use, but because they didn't want me--at that particular time in the 70s, Blacks weren't trusted with the money, with the dope, of not having that full supervision because you'd be out working under cover on patrol--I was denied the position of narcotics detective. (29)

In this period of overt, often hostile treatment of Black officers, they were perceived of as not reliable enough to trust with cash and drugs in the daily performance of their jobs. This perception legitimized their exclusion

from respected assignments. Although this respondent's agency eventually relaxed such restrictions, another respondent explains how the perception still operates:

I tried to push for more African American training officers and the response that I was given was that they were questioned, they thought they were playing favorites. I be lying if I told you that there were not two standards at this department. For Blacks, you're either excellent or you're no good. Nothing in between. For Whites you're either no good, you're OK or you're excellent. You know, unless you're one of those African Americans that's outstanding, that's above reproach, you get shafted. (17)

The last chapter illustrated the role of training, and White training officers specifically, in limiting the numbers of Black officers in agencies. This respondent discusses how the ideological construct of Black unreliability is employed to define Black training officers as incapable of impartiality and, therefore, serves to legitimize their exclusion from these important positions. Questioning Black officer integrity in such a manner not only legitimizes White perceptions of reality, but further promotes the understanding among Black officers that White officers seek to limit Black participation and advancement in policing.

Parallel to Feagin's (1991) conclusion drawn from his work with the Black middle class, in settings other than those related to their occupation, Black officers are afforded less protection from overt racism and are more

likely to face encounters in which they are treated as not trustworthy. One respondent discusses her treatment while purchasing a home:

I had no problem out of the loan company whatsoever getting the loan. When I went to closing, an attorney made a statement to me that I would never forget. He stated, "If you miss your monthly payments, I get to make your life miserable." And I thought that was extremely unprofessional. (23)

Respondents regard comments such as these, not as merely flippant statements made in jest, but as commentaries made by White people about their conception of Black people. Respondents hear these types of comments repeatedly, either personally or vicariously, and tend to remember them and the meaning contained within. White people have the tendency to regard such reactions by Black people as unimportant and over-sensitize.

Attributing Oversensitivity

Respondents who question the attitudes and actions of White people, who address what they perceive of as injustices and offer remedies, are considered as over-sensitive and labeled as "troublemakers," "radical," or as "nosy." Fifteen respondents (30 percent) discuss how their demands to be treated fairly are met with the inability of White officers to understand Black officers' understanding of the injustices they suffer:

Some people used to say I was a troublemaker, I said, "troublemaker, how? What have I done to

cause trouble? Because I won't let you say nigger in front of me? That's a troublemaker? Because I won't let you treat people wrong, that's a troublemaker?" I said, "come on, get with it, who's the troublemaker? Because I won't let you push my face in the mud? And I'm a troublemaker?" Come on, let's be real, you know. (44)

This respondent maintained that his more than twenty years of service were made all the more remarkable because of this attitude shared by White officers. Long after initial confrontations have passed, Black officers carry the label of troublemaker throughout their career; older White officers do not forget and newer officers are socialized to avoid him/her:

I was seen as very unfavorable by a lot of people and perhaps I still am because I sense that a lot of people see me as a threat. The fact that you're advocating for change or the need for change, and it wasn't done in such a way that I was trying to attack any individual, I was simply being outspoken about the changes that I felt were necessary-- to change to system from within and make it better. (10)

This respondent's understanding of agency problems and solutions that would make the agency better are clearly not shared by the majority of White officers. He described feeling, ten years ago, the tension as he walked by White officers after challenging promotion tests. Today, years later, even though he now serves in a command capacity, he finds that others still perceive him as "radical" and are reluctant to interact with him.

A female lieutenant similarly describes White officers' reaction to the formation of a Black union in her agency.

White officers regarded the process as unnecessary and threatening and brought up the familiar argument that it constituted reverse discrimination:

A few years ago we started a Black police officer association at the department and even though I was not directly experiencing problems, I am certainly sensitive to the needs of those who are and, I remember that started a lot of controversy at the department because, you know, people felt like, "why do the Blacks need that, it's gonna be a radical group, they're discriminating, it's only for Black officers." If we started an organization just for White officers there wouldn't be a problem. (14)

Individual Black officers who challenge racism are a problem in traditionally White agencies; however, Black collectivities are an even more potent threat to established patterns of racism and are attacked and resisted by White officers. Individual officers who sue can have an impact on changing traditional practices by addressing specific policies in the agency; however, the formation of a stable Black collectivity can work to change all aspects of policing and better represent the perceived needs of Black officers and members of Black communities. The above respondent notes, interestingly, how exclusive White organizations that promote the interests of White people are normal and fit the expected notion of the world. Organizations representing the will and desire of Black officers are beyond the comprehension of White officers and are forcefully resisted.

Cultural Denigration

As discussed in chapter three, respondents feel that continuing structural segregation in America (re)produces significant cultural differences between White and Black people. Understanding these differences is essential in order to understand differences in the two groups' knowledge and comprehension of racism. The following discussion illustrates respondents' awareness that White people view Black culture as inferior and promote this conception as a reason for the continuing secondary position of Black people in American society.

To Define as Uncivilized

While examining the role of racial segregation in the formation of distinct White and Black cultures, six respondents (12 percent) describe how these cultural differences affect how White officers police what they regard as uncivilized Black communities:

The difference between Black police officers and White police officers [is that] we know what goes on in our communities. We know, I know that Black folks hanging under a tree does not constitute Black people doing something wrong because my stepfather played dominoes under a tree because where else were they going to go. They didn't have anyplace to go, so they played under a tree. So if I see a bunch of Black men under a tree playing dominoes and drinking, that doesn't bother me, because I know that there not doing anything wrong, because that's part of our culture. Because we didn't have the clubs, and we didn't have the YMCA, and we didn't have these other things that were available to non African Americans. So that's the kind of stuff that White police officers don't

realize. That's their culture differences, and what we, and a bunch of us together making a lot of noise is to them disturbing the peace. To me it's not. Like folks, getting together and making a lot of noise having a good time. So those are the differences that they haven't been able to deal with. (1)

Groups of Black men socializing and playing games in public are perceived by White officers as engaging in behavior that is outside the societal norm. They are unable to understand how extended social and economic deprivation impacts the development of culture in Black communities and instead focus on what is seemingly a rejection of the dominant values of hard work and individual success. This perception of Black people as less than civilized legitimizes rudeness and the use of force by White officers:

You've seen the ghetto-blasters? Okay. A White officer comes in on a noise complaint, goes in and on first sight his perception is that this is crazy, this is out of control. He will, without doing further assessment of the situation, he will go in and rule this area with an iron fist and just be ugly, be mean to the people. (39)

Ideological constructions of Black people as emotional and somehow primitive are interrelated to ideological constructions of White people as serious, rational and able to exercise restraint over their attitudes and behaviors. Encountering situations in which there is too much noise, for example, implies a lack of restraint, chaos, and a loss of control which White officers feel they must overcome by restoring order through any possible means:

Some of these young White officers, you put them in a situation, they may panic. They have seen

these Tarzan movies and these different, you know, African type movies where natives act a certain way. You get these guys and you put em in a situation like that, they may think that's the type of mentality they're dealing with and grab their pistol and start firing. (44)

To Define or Treat as Backward

In addition to this understanding of White officers' impressions of Black people, which is based on observations of White officers' interactions in Black communities, twelve respondents (24 percent) relate conversations with White officers in which comments were made that defined the behavior of Black people as backward. The first respondent describes an experience he had with White officers before becoming an officer which illustrated to him how White people think about Black people:

I was in the military [when I was] picked up for armed robbery. In dress Air Force blues, standing on the street corner waiting on a bus. Police officers pulled up and said get in the car. What for? I said get in the car. I said what for? Nigger, I said get in the car. I wasn't about to go scrapping with two police officers so I got in the car. They take me back down to a service station no more than a block or two down the street and ugh, the guy looks at me and I mean he says, "he's not dark enough." Nothing else. He's not dark enough. If I had perhaps better lighter or been darker rather, I'd probably be in jail. No other identifiers, just he's not dark enough. And I asked the guys, I said, but do you think that I'd be so dumb that I'd rob a gas station two blocks from where I'm standing on a street corner waiting on a bus. Are you kidding? I said I'd have to be absolutely stupid. (7)

This respondent found it hard to believe that White officers had so little respect for the intelligence of Black people that they could have imagined him as the criminal

they sought. His alternative explanation is that it did not matter to the White officers whether it was him or not, thereby showing little concern for his individual rights, and he was merely fortunate that his skin was not "dark" enough. Another respondent also discussed how he learned, as an officer, that his White counterparts share a perception of Black people's concerns as being unimportant and, therefore, as easily dismissed:

We went to a domestic disturbance call [and] we handled the call. As we were clearing the call, the guy that I'm riding with, he keys his radio and he says, "To headquarters 108" which means I'm back in service or we're back in service, "NR" which means no report, and "TNT." Well I was familiar with the designation NR, but I was not familiar with the designation TNT 'cause I had not heard, I had now been on the police department about three years and I had never heard anybody use that designation. So I asked him, I said, "What does TNT mean" and he, he started to blush and he said, "Oh, you know what it means," I said, "No," I said, "What does it mean?" And then I asked him again. He goes, "It means typical 'Nigger' trouble." Yeah, you know, so I'm on the job, I'm really in the job now three years before I really start seeing the true accepted thing that's occurring in the police department. (26)

That problems of violence can be dismissed in such a fashion due to race was as much of a surprise to this respondent as the White officer's discovery that his comments and the meaning they implied were not shared or appreciated. This situation reflects the normality of White dominant ideas and the tendency of White people to adopt and perpetuate these ideas without much critical analysis. That racist ideology is learned and becomes an accepted part of

White consciousness is informative in that it shows how the (re)production of racism can be unintentional, or subtle, yet still be harmful to Black people who encounter it. Another respondent shares how comments about the nature of Black people deeply affect him, even when not directed at him and how White people, when confronted with this realization, attempt to rationalize and re-direct their comments:

No, they never were directed toward me but they were directed toward a class of people that certainly I'm a member of. You know, they say Nigger can mean any low down person be it, you know, Black or White but I think the reference was an African-American population. (5)

Further, five respondents (10 percent) discuss how, in the performance of their duties, they encounter cultural symbols of White supremacy or cultural symbols which denigrate Black people and define them as problematic. These officers discuss the power of statues, signs, stickers, clothing and flags in reinforcing and perpetuating racist notions:

One thing that I was noticing when I was driving down the street is that a couple doors down there is a big rebel flag hanging outside, just down from the station. And you see these flags and other racist symbols and you're aware that these people who have these flags or hold these meetings, you know that their goal is to build one ethnic group up in America and tear another one down. When you see something like that, I'm not saying that I like it, but I prefer that I'd rather know, OK, I can look at them and say I know exactly what's in your heart, I know how you feel about me. (16)

Evaluation of intent is certainly easier when confronted with forms of overt racial behavior; however, it is difficult for officers to protect and serve communities of people who adorn their possessions and their bodies with symbols which illustrate that they feel White people are superior and Black people are backward and should stay in their place. This respondent is confronted with the southern flag, regarded by him as containing overt racist meaning, every time he comes to or leaves his place of work. This offends him, constantly serves to remind him nature of racism and makes the daily performance of his job more stressful.

To Attribute Language Deficiency

Fifteen respondents (30 percent) further illustrated how defining and problematizing Black people as uncivilized and/or backward is related to processes which attribute them with language deficiencies. The first respondent expands upon the theme, developed by many officers, that social segregation has promoted the development of two distinct cultures with distinct languages. In doing so, however, she discusses how White people regard Black language skills as inferior:

Because I grew up in a predominately, well I grew up in an all Black community, there were nothing but Black people around me. We talk different and a lot of times people from other races say, "Well they don't know how to talk." No, this is the way we grew up talking and this is just how we talk and a lot of times they don't understand. (22)

This lack of understanding, promoted by continuing segregation and reliance on racial stereotypes, becomes manifest in the way in which White officers treat members of the Black community during police-citizen encounters. Respondents discuss situations in which White officers, acting of (mis)conceptions of Black people and the ways in which they communicate adopt what they perceive of as "Black" language forms:

It's just the way that he would talk to that African-American person. He would change his tone of voice, change his lingo or whatever to fit that Black person and I just felt so uneasy because you know, he was trying to be Black. He was trying to talk Black and act Black because he was on that side of town and because I was there. And that sergeant walks over there and has never met this kid before in his life and starts talking to him like he's known him all of his life and things like that because he was Black. (13)

This type of encounter, frequently discussed by respondents, illustrates that White officers perceive Black people as having language deficiencies which must be addressed by adopting "Black lingo" instead of communicating in the manner in which the White officer normally communicates. Further, these encounters provide Black officers with information which contributes to their general body of knowledge about how White people think about Black people. This information about White people and racism is particularly meaningful when language deficiencies are attributed to the respondent, rather than Black people in general. One respondent recounts a training incident:

I stopped this guy, and the guy didn't have his driver's license on him, and the sergeant said, "we want to write this guy up for failure to carry and exhibit a license on demand." And he asked me, "can you spell all that?" In front of the guy. I still tease him today about that. And I said, well, and I looked at him and I smiled, and I said, yes, sir, I can spell all that. And I spelled it, I wrote the guy his citation, and we got back in the vehicle. And I said, Sarge, I said, if I couldn't spell it, I sure would have been embarrassed. And we laughed about it, he didn't remember it, I had to remind him about it....And I understood, really. And I love him to death. He's one of the best people and bosses that I can have. He really is, he's a good person, and a good heart. And a lot of people are good-hearted, even racists, really. They are uninformed. (45)

This respondent illustrates how the problematization of Black people is a powerful ideological process that many White people engage in without consciously knowing that they are doing so. For example, the event is memorable for the Black officer and has shaped his understanding of his supervisor, White people in general, as well as racism. The White officer, on the other hand, initially laughed at his comment and then forgot about it.

Biological/Cultural Denigration

White people further attribute problems that Black people face to an interaction of biological and cultural factors which conspire to keep Black people in secondary social positions. Notions of innate biological inferiority are linked with notions of Black cultural backwardness to define what it means to be Black and perpetuate the

treatment of Black people in American society. Respondents discussed two forms of this ideological process which have a tremendous impact on their daily lives.

Criminalization

Essed discusses how this process legitimizes anti-Black violence which has become a way of everyday life in America (1991: 220). Thirty-eight respondents (76 percent) discuss the myriad ways in which they encounter this ideological and attitudinal form of racism from first-hand personal accounts or from vicarious experiences shared with them by other Black people. The first respondent illustrates how she frequently witnesses this notion arising in planning meetings among White officers:

I have been in meetings where persons, White officers, have been describing an event that happened and they'll say, "Well the Black male grabbed the White female and then he dragged her down the street." But then if it's two Blacks, you don't hear, "the Black male grabbed the Black female and dragged her down the street," you hear, "and then the man grabbed the woman and dragged her down the street." Well why do you think they say the Black male grabbed the White female? We're sitting in the meeting, see it's so natural until I could be sitting in the meeting and they're still doing this cause it's just, they don't even realize it anymore. Why do you think they say that? God, cause it creates such a horrible picture, it gets everybody all stirred up to say, "That Black male grabbed that White female." Now everybody's all, "My God." (14)

White people tap into traditional racist ideological messages concerning Black males and White females, often unconsciously, and promote the notion that Black against

White crime is particularly horrible. Black officers in attendance are treated as if they automatically share the notion and are treated as "over-sensitive" if they point out how such conversations (re)produce racist ideology.

Respondents conversations were literally filled with examples in which they felt as if they had been treated as criminals. Although three respondents (1.5 percent) mention specific disciplinary incidents in their agency, respondents overwhelmingly discussed negative treatment they experienced in public places while out of uniform. Often this treatment comes by the hands of police officers. One respondent describes how his ill treatment by White police officers before he became an officer has had a lasting impact on his life:

[I was with a friend in a restaurant who had a dispute with management] I was grabbed, put in a police arm bar with my hands behind my back the guy had my hands so far behind my back that I felt my collar bone. I felt like he was gonna pop my arm and you know I never said anything verbally wrong to him, I mean it was unmerited, unwarranted, okay and basically he held me there and he kept applying pressure to my arm and asking questions, "what's my name?" And, you know, I mean I was in serious pain the entire time and they did all that just to get my name and whatever. They trespassed me from the establishment, but that was fine with me, but for him to just grab me like that, it just stuck in my mind, it still does.
(28)

Again, this officer, judging a past encounter with police from his current knowledge of police practices, finds that the level of officer response to the situation was excessive. Further, he illustrates how these types of

encounters remain with the respondents for long periods of time, again supporting the notion of the cumulative impact of racism. They tend to shape, not only how Black people come to understand racism, but their own self images and self-worth in a racist society:

You get perceived that way. And that's disheartening at times. I remember I went to Church's Chicken once. I was a cop, but I was off duty. I remember that I had on a tank top, and the lady was sitting in a car, and I assumed that was her husband in there buying her chicken, and I walked by her car. I mean, I'm clean cut, I'm a clean cut guy. Not thuggish at all. I just got out of my car, I drove a nice car. Actually, I was driving an older Mercedes. I pulled up next to her. She was sitting there, I got out of my car, and in a second, [she] locked all of her doors. Now, you can either be insulted by that, or you have to understand. I don't know what experiences this lady has had with Black males. But should I be judged? Or should everybody, should all White males be judged because of McVeigh. You know, because Blacks are a smaller group of people, therefore, they're going to be scrutinized a little more. (45)

This respondent, as do others, search to find meaning in such experiences. They are frustrated and insulted by their treatment, particularly since they perceive themselves to be responsible citizens who work to maintain public order. However, in situations in which they are not protected by the authority invested in their uniforms, they are perceived of as treats to the public order. One situation in which respondents frequently encounter this ideological construct is in stores while shopping:

You walk into a department store and you know language is not universally verbal. I mean you just get that in that sense. That somebody doesn't want you, or they don't trust you, or they fear

you or something, you know. Ugh, [they] talk to you in one tone one moment and the person behind you walks up and, "sure what can I do for you," and you see that kind of stuff. You know, you can't do anything about it so, you don't let aggravate you or anything like that, but . . .
(10)

Some respondents, however, do attempt to do something about this treatment. Respondents often seek the shelter provided by their occupational status by confronting the perpetrator(s) and letting them know that they are, in fact, police officers rather than criminals. For many of the respondents it is a painful decision to emphasize their occupation in order to cover for their race; however these respondents feel that, although they won not change the ideological construct, they can at least address affronts to their self-image:

My nephew and a couple of guys went into a mall. I know this goes on. The security...we went in there, we were looking for something. And we were talking and just walking around. And we were dressed casually. Finally, we noticed, we didn't initially pay any attention that everywhere we went we were being followed. So finally, hell, I just asked them. I said, "are you doing what I think you're doing?" I said, "ever since we've been coming in here, you've been following us and everybody else is standing around. We've got money, we're police, we're going to pay for what we get." The guy was so embarrassed. I hated to do him that way, but I know his boss had told him to do it that, so I really can't blame him totally. I blame the system that's in place. Because if you're African American and you go into a department store, they're going to watch your butt, and I know that.(46)

This comment reflects the officer's understanding of racism as structural and institutional and beyond the

personal feelings of one employee. Therefore, he conceded that Black people will continue to face this treatment in stores and, if previous comments serve as indicators, will continue to be personally bothered by this form of racism. Another situation in which respondents frequently encounter this ideological construct in public is while driving from one point to another. Many respondents discuss their knowledge of police policies for stopping Black motorists and, more importantly, many respondent have been stopped while driving out of uniform:

Every time I'd go through there I would get stopped and the excuse was always, "You were speeding a couple miles back down the road, you mind if I look in your vehicle?" It was, you know, it was the same old line, "Go ahead look so I can get on." They looked through, search around and, "All right, I'm not gonna write you a ticket this time, go ahead on." So, you know, I'm not even sure that I may not have been stopped by the same officer several times who didn't recognize that I'm the same person that they're stopping every month or so whenever I got an opportunity to go home, but it was constant. (42)

This form of treatment becomes a regular part of many officers' lives. They come to recognize the possibility of being stopped and questioned at any point and have developed an awareness of the steps they must follow in order to control the encounter with a White officer without escalating it. One respondent illustrates how he has come to rationalize being stopped as almost routine even though he maintains the treatment is unfair:

I have a '86 Chevrolet Capris which is a highly stolen type vehicle, usually associated with [drug dealers], but that's not fair to me or any other citizen because, you know, my preference of vehicle is of no evidence to the type person that I am. That's where it's stereotypical thinking that should be done away with. If I were to have anything that would imply that that was my lifestyle, or frequently visit high drug crime areas, something associated with it that would send off extra signals to officers, then I would have no problem with it. But just because I drive that type of vehicle and I'm a Black male, that just doesn't cut it, and that's what I found myself faced with predominantly on weekends after midnight. In three years I would say I've been stopped probably six times with no traffic violation. (49)

This respondent calmly discusses what most White people would never imagine--the possibility that at any moment, without provocation and without receiving a citation that they could be pulled over and questioned by police officers. Another respondent illustrated how perceptions of Black people as criminals and subsequent treatment extends beyond shopping or driving, interrupting recreational activities:

I mean we're just at the beach, just talking among ourselves, you know kids joking and stuff like that and [two White men] came up thinking that we were selling drugs; that this is why we were there. That happened this past summer. (5)

Criminalization is, therefore, clearly part of the process which legitimizes the repression of Black Americans. Respondents illustrate how it plays a role in staff meetings designed to plan departmental policies as well as in how officers treat Black citizens during encounters. It further impacts officers while engaging in activities that most

White Americans have come to take for granted. Black people are constantly reminded of their secondary place in society and of how White people regard them by such encounters.

Underestimation

The combination of notions such as biological determinism and cultural determinism are also manifested in the idea that Black people are incapable of intellectual advancement; that Black people have a low drive to succeed. White people regard the failure of Black people as proof of their inferiority and the success of Black people, not as a sign of intellectual prowess, but as evidence that there is no discrimination in society. This "no-lose" conception is understood by twenty-three of the respondents (46 percent) as an underestimation of their abilities. One respondent discusses why a former boss decided to hire him:

See that's still judging of a Black person . . . A manager there, he gave me a job and I worked there for awhile and I did good and everything and later on I found out that he gave me the job because he wanted to prove to the owner that he could train a Black person to sell \$300 shoes and \$1500 suits. That was the only reason he hired me. (12)

The perception of Black people as generally incompetent to perform the required functions of a clothing salesperson is further manifested in the occupation of policing. One respondent laments that, "there were a lot of guys that were great police officers, Black guys, man this department really over-looked their ability" (44). These officers are not recognized as capable or smart enough to fill command

slots and the frequency of being denied specialized assignments is justified by conceptions of intellectual inferiority:

There may be a misconception or perception that Blacks may not be doing as well and may not be qualified to do certain things, that's a perception out there . . . I've experienced it, where I felt that individuals had a different set of goals. Supervisors came to me and provided me with the information, and told me, "this is what you need to do." In other words, that made me feel like they were trying to make it appear that I was incompetent. (48)

Respondents find that this perception extends beyond the organizational boundaries of their police agencies to include members of the White public who, although they are not trained police officers, treat Black officers as though they are too incompetent to perform their job correctly:

You have to deal with the White public thinking that you're not competent enough to handle the call, they almost want to walk you through it to make sure you're doing it right and make sure you know how to do it. And then you have to deal with the different departments in which you work, and not necessarily my department. I'm taking about the whole, and I know a lot of Black officers. And then you have to deal with the department scrutinizing you and wondering can you and can you not do this or that or the other. So you really, you're almost in a shell by yourself, so to speak. (45)

Facing the underestimation of his abilities at all levels of the agency--by peers, supervisors and command staff--as well as by citizens in public, is discussed both personally and vicariously by this officer. Although well trained and having served as an officer for seventeen years,

he continually encounters challenges to his intellectual and professional abilities.

For Black women officers, underestimation is a function of both race and gender, "in general, if you come on this department, I have told females, and I may be wrong in my perception of things, but they don't particularly want you here anyway, because you're Black. Because they feel you're not qualified" (8). Particularly because policing is traditionally a male dominated occupation, it is difficult for men to regard women as capable and/or physically and emotionally strong enough to do the job:

For women it's harder because you're there with all those men and men never want to admit that women are just as good as they are. So you have to strive just that much harder to do as good, if not better than, you know, the men that you're, you're going to the Academy with. (30)

However, Black women further share with Black men that they are regarded as intellectually inferior and, therefore, less capable than White women and men. Respondents, consequently, share the notion that they have to be better at their jobs than everyone else. Being successful means much more than doing the job competently, it requires overcoming notions which maintain that Black people are incapable of adequate job performance:

We would have to be more professional. We have to make sure that we conduct ourselves--I would say that we would--we would have to carry ourselves in a different way. We're being watched as not only an officer, but as Black officers. We have to show that we can be professional, we can do the job, and that we're not as maybe uneducated as people think we are. (50)

Beginning from a position in which they realize that they are regarded as incapable forces respondents to work harder to show that they are personally competent. However, because this form of problematization is directed at all Black people, respondents maintain that they face added responsibility. The actions of one Black officer is seen as a reflection of the actions of all Black officers specifically and of all Black people in general:

But you know, I make a mistake, now you may make the same mistake, but for some reason my mistake carries a great deal of weight as opposed to [yours. It's] a racial and social statement. If you make a mistake, it's just you making a mistake. There's no aspersion on the rest of White society, it's just you making a mistake; you're just a dumb White who made a mistake, you know. I make a mistake and all of a sudden all Black people are called into question because I made a mistake or, because I'm stupid, you know, and that's crazy, that's crazy. (27)

Respondents, thereby, illustrate an awareness of their treatment as being distinct from that of White officers in similar circumstances. Further, the awareness of this perception of Blacks and the consequent scrutiny they receive because of it, adds pressure and extra stress to the occupational role they fill:

If a person of another race, primarily a White, had moved up at the same rate that I had and then make a mistake, that's not gonna affect the rest of the Whites that might be promoted. However, if I, a minority, make a mistake or do something that's improper, it could taint any other Blacks or minorities that might have that opportunity in the future. (19)

Respondents' discussions illustrate that they conceive of underestimation as a shared experience that is more than just their treatment by individual White people. It is a rather widely held ideological construct which serves to justify limits placed on Black participation in American society. It is further used to justify the primary position of White people. For example, one respondent illustrates how the underestimation of Black people is historically related to the overestimation of White people. He provides an example in which, during a meeting to decide who should be hired, his boss maintained that a White, seventeen year-old Seven-Eleven clerk was a choice comparable to a Black man with military experience and four years of college. He felt frustrated by the experience and concludes, "just because you're White doesn't mean that you are qualified" (25).

Biological Denigration

Finally, the ideological denigration of Black people is rooted in the justification of their secondary social position merely on the basis of their perceived biological inferiority to White people. This section provides limited support for Essed's finding and illustrates that respondents are aware that many White people continually re(produce) the notion that Black people are intellectually, emotionally and culturally inferior and rationalize this reproductive process largely due to the biological make-up of Black people.

Race Purism

Five respondents (10 percent) discuss events from which this form of biological denigration can be observed. One officer's example reflects the American fascination with skin color and how it continues to be considered by White people as somehow indicative of attitudes and behavior:

I remember once he was telling me, he says that, "you're not black," he's talking about the literal sense, you know, and he says, "You're brown." Now I know I'm black as most, I'm black, as a Black person I'm probably darker than the average Black person, you know. He says to me, you know, he's trying to be complimentary, in a sense of saying. In his effort to be complimentary, he was saying to me in a sense like there should be something ashamed to be, that I am black, so he's trying to say, well you're really not black, you're brown. Well, my remark was to him was, "You're not really white, you're tan," you know, I mean after I had his shirt cause in those times the sergeants used to wear a white shirt, I said, "You're not the same color as that shirt, I mean, you're not," but that was his effort of trying to, you know, come to some grounds of, of familiarity, friendship or so forth and I've had experiences like that. (27)

This White sergeant shared the notion that the blacker the skin, the less capable the officer. Confronted with a Black officer he found to be capable, he attributed the quality to the tone of the officer's skin and defined him as brown. This reduction of a person's character to the shade of skin demonstrates a base ideology responsible for the (re)production of racism in American society, that dark skin signifies inferiority and that the degree of inferiority can be measured by tonal variations in skin color.

Summary

I'm riding with another guy, a White male, and he was closer to my age, but he had been on the police department, you know, six years at that time and we're passing by an apartment complex and I'm sitting in the passenger-side of the car, this guy's driving the car, and he looks over at these people, we passed some Black people who were out in the yard of this apartment and he goes, just out of the blue he goes, "Now, those people there, I would consider them Niggers." I said to him, "What are you talking about?" He goes, he didn't think that I would even take exception to it, "Well, you know, guys like you and these other guys on the police department" and he named some people in the community, "I, I don't consider them that way, but people like that, drinking and all, I would consider them Niggers." I said, "let me tell you something." I said, "I'm a Black person" and I said, "I don't need you or anybody to tell me what you think a Nigger is." I said, "Now if you think that they're Niggers, that's fine. But as long as we're riding around in this car, I'm not getting into that." He goes, "Okay man, okay." But he took it like it was not a big deal. (26)

Respondents' discussions provide support for Essed's notion of "problematization." She maintains that, "these constructions constitute an ideological climate that allow injustices and nurture the consensus in which racial and ethnic difference is construed in hierarchical order" (1991: 170). Respondents' knowledge of racism in America, and policing specifically, allow them to understand the role of racist ideology in (re)producing a racial hierarchy in which Black people are defined as inferior, rationalizes their exclusion from societal rewards and legitimizes practices which contain them.

The attribution of biological, personality and cultural problems which explain Black peoples' secondary status in America, at the same time posits that racism is not a causative factor in maintaining this condition. Examples of forms of denigration illustrate how White officers view both Black officers and members of Black communities. Further, respondents discuss how they are treated by members of White communities.

These discussions reinforce themes previously discussed by respondents. Racism is first discussed as societal wide and not as the actions of a few individual racists. It is then shown how, outside of the relative protection of the occupational setting, respondents more frequently encounter overt forms of racism. Respondents illustrate that racist encounters are remembered and shared among Black people, while White people dismiss the encounter's importance and/or forget about it. A great deal of extra pressure and stress result from an understanding of the necessity to exceed at which most White people hope they will fail. Finally, Black officer collectivities seem to be considered a threat to the White definition of Black people as well as the institutional practices which promote these definitions. The next chapter will examine how processes discussed in this chapter play an important role in containing Black people in a subordinate social position.

CHAPTER SIX
CONTAINMENT:
DENIAL of RACISM to INTIMIDATION and RETALIATION
ANAYLSIS of DATA (PART IV)

Introduction

You want to call it progress because there aren't big jokes in the briefing room, the word 'Nigger' is not used in the briefing room. You'd like to call it progress and to certain people in certain respects, that's exactly what it is. But the hard answer is that those feelings will come out. They're starting to come out in certain policies, in certain decisions that are being made that is very, very concealed because what you do is you prevent the fact that there is an agenda of making sure this person is kept down. (16)

Many overt forms of racism are experienced by respondents less frequently within the police occupational setting today than in the past. However, the above respondent discusses how, despite perceptions of improvement in race relations, more subtle forms of racism still operate to marginalize Black people, problematize them and contain them or "keep them down." Respondents maintain that Black officers face both ideological constructions, attitudes and institutional practices that seek to suppress their definition of reality as well as their advancement in police agencies, thereby containing them in subordinate positions.

The experiential-racism tradition in general and Essed (1991) specifically argue that, ideologically, this form of racism operates by denying that racism exists and, therefore, that Black people who complain do so without justification. Further, ideological constructions which manage perceived racial differences operate to maintain the conception that Black and White people are inherently opposite and should be treated as such. Stereotypical notions of these differences are found in racist talk, jokes and cartoons which serve to belittle and humiliate Black people while reinforcing their subordinate position in American society relative to White people.

Further, institutional and interpersonal practices keep close control over Black employees while various forms of harassment (re)produce the racial hierarchy. Techniques of intimidation such as racial insults and physical violence are employed regularly to thwart the advancement of Black people beyond their subordinate position. When they address racist attitudes and behaviors, respondents argue, they are perceived of as threatening, and face, from White people, a range of containing responses which range from mere resentment to retaliatory actions which seek to pacify them and can result in emotional and/or physical harm. These responses from White people are collectively shared among Black people thereby magnifying their effect.

Denial Of Racism

The previous chapter discussed respondents' understandings of some of the ways White people ideologically hold Black people responsible for racial problems. It was shown that these notions simultaneously imply that racism is no longer a problem in America. This section expands upon previous discussion by illustrating how in respondents' experiences White people deny that racism exists.

Reluctance To Deal With Racism

Respondents share an awareness that most White officers operate from a mindset that Black people should be satisfied with a subordinate position in society and are, therefore, reluctant to accept racism as a problem, deal with it honestly and support policies which seek to rectify racist practices. The first respondent discusses how White officers are likely to accept changes only to keep their jobs:

Can you imagine the mind set of the administrators that were around here and how they may have felt about African-Americans coming into this department? But, accepting them solely because they had to, because the law required it. Can you imagine the mind set that they may have had about the level of willingness to do the right thing and assist them in assimilating upwards, sideways, whatever way into this department. It wasn't there. It came from a continual pounding at the door. We gotta do this, we gotta do that, we gotta do this, we gotta do that. You know, perpetual.
(10)

Recognizing the inability and/or reluctance of most White people to work for changes in the nature of racism,

respondents argue that Black people must continually, vigilantly work for changes in the conditions they encounter. Without a sustained effort, past gains can be lost and the future of Black officers would be in doubt. Nine respondents (18 percent) discuss the entrenched idea they see in the minds of White people that racism is no longer a problem to be dealt with and their consequent inaction in addressing racism. For example, the following respondent summarizes conversations she has had with White officers over the necessity of cultural diversity training in police agencies:

"Well why do we have to go through that?" You know, "We get along just fine, we don't have a problem. Why are they shoving this down our throats?" And I said, "Well consider this," I said, "When you go out to lunch with your White friend and somebody at the table used the word "Nigger," I said, "When you get to the point where you are offended by that and make that known with that group, you know, until you get to that point, maybe you could benefit from cultural diversity training." When I get to the point, if I'm not at the point yet where when I go out with my Black friends or somebody brings up the word "Cracker" and I'm not offended by that, maybe I can benefit from cultural diversity training. Because I think that is the perfect society, when we're presented with racism in our comfort zones and we still fight for what's right. I mean that's really the perfect place to be. (14)

Despite the even handed approach of this respondent in pointing out that all people can benefit from this type of training, most Black people who address issues of racism find that White people react as though personally accused of

racism. Responses range from hurt to anger and renew White indignation towards Black people.

Anger Over Black Officers Who Point Out Racism

Respondents argue that pointing out that racism still exists often results in White people feeling offended and reacting forcefully. Strong emotional responses make it further difficult for Black people to successfully address the concerns they share about continuing racism in a constructive manner. Seven respondents (14 percent) discuss the responses of White officers to their claims of racial injustice. One respondent commented on the level of tension in his agency after he successfully challenged promotional exams as being racially biased, "the fact that they had to reverse that portion of the test infuriated hundreds of people around here. It was so tense that you had to almost use a machete to walk through the building" (10)

Interestingly, changing the exam procedures ultimately benefited both male and female White officers who were not part of the "good old boy" network. However, the perception existed that a critique of promotional practices was somehow a critique of White officers in general. Consequently, many of the officers who benefited attempted to suppress the activities of this respondent by demonstrating their anger with him by refusing to interact with him normally as a co-worker. Similar responses have been experienced by other respondents who uniformly stress the duration of White

anger. For example, another respondent reported how his reaction to a single racist encounter resulted in him becoming the object of intensive and prolonged departmental scorn:

I saw the police officer when he knocked him off the bicycle with the patrol car. The man went down to the ground, the officer put a choke-hold on the man, I got there, the officer struck him a couple times in the solarplex with a night stick and was choking him to the point where his eyes, he had lost body control, he had urinated over himself, his mouth was foaming and his eyes was going back which he was losing a lot of, I guess, what you call your involuntary muscle control and the voluntary muscle control, he was losing that, so that gave me a indication that we're about to kill this person. So I got out and I said, "turn this man loose, he's gonna die on us, take your hands around his neck and let me have him." So the officer was really upset but he did what I asked him. Then I went in and talked to his sergeant about it cause his sergeant was right down the street, his sergeant said, "Well if you got a complaint, you need to forward it to the lieutenant cause I didn't see anything." I said, "Okay." One of the other officers after we turned the guy loose, he says, "You motherfucker." The guy sued and the department settled out of court but there was implications that we was in this thing together because we was Black, I was asked questions such as, "How long you been knowing this man?" I never seen that man before, I just knew he was a man. "Did you get a kickback? How much did he pay you?" Things like that, you know . . . I was interrogated by investigators from the insurance company, from risk management, police department. "How did you buy that Cutlass Supreme out there?" [Other officers] stayed away from me . . . and if I didn't dot all my I's or crossed all my T's on some reports, sergeants were ready to write me up. (31)

The officer's complaint of excessive force, as well as the racial implications of the nature of the complaint, was

seen as a personal affront to the offending officer and a betrayal to all other White officers in the department. Instead of agency leaders accepting that race could have been a factor and addressing this incident in a meaningful way, the complaining officer experienced considerable anger. Acting on the basis of what he considered just, he found his career destroyed through an almost daily repertoire of harassment and intimidation and retired prematurely.

Backlash/Self-Pity

Similarly, respondents argue that White officers and the agencies they have historically controlled respond to Black understandings of racism and attempts to rectify that racism with self-pity by which they (re)define themselves as victims. Respondents report that White officers further reinforce their dominance by lashing out against the efforts of Black officers to promote change. Fourteen respondents (28 percent) discuss various manifestations of this form of racism that they have encountered. The first respondent discusses the cry of most White officers to policies which aim to rectify past racial injustices:

I don't think that you can ever get to a fair department to work at. I don't care if you put a Black man in charge, a Black woman, a White woman, I think then Whites are going to complain. It's going to be the reverse discrimination. (6)

Demonstrating an understanding of the structuring factors of racism, many respondents seek to explain under what conditions they encounter backlash. One notes that

backlash is less likely in times of economic prosperity because there is more than enough to go around and everyone is able to achieve their goals. However, during times of economic uncertainty:

You're talking about struggling people, middle income, you know, trying to get your kids in college. You're trying to do more for your family than the opportunities were there for you. So when you're caught up in that struggle, you're caught up into type-casting. It's referred to as displaced aggression, displaced venting, "Well why is that blankity, blankity Nigger here?" (29)

Economic and occupational competition, therefore, remains intimately tied to racial constructions. As White people compete, they often invoke the value of past practices which protected them against competition from members of minority groups. Black people's attacks on these segregating policies and their development of strategies which ensure that they are able to compete for jobs weakens the traditional security that White people have been afforded. Respondents conclude from their myriad experiences that White job insecurity manifests in a backlash which questions the occupational competency of Black people and calls for a reversal of policies which allow them increased opportunity:

I think that we're very competitive in this agency as well, as far as promotion and advancement and things of that nature and I think a lot of people will blame their short-comings, as far as if they compete against an African American, and even though the test scores are right there--it's posted--they still may resent that person getting

promoted and feel that they're getting promoted and such because they're Black. (42)

Many respondents discuss encounters in which White people argue that the only reason Black people fill certain positions is because of their color. In this manner White people can reinforce notions of Black intellectual inferiority, support policies designed to limit Black participation and challenge attempts to address racial injustices. The following officer discusses a particularly hurtful experience in which White co-workers reacted negatively to his advancement in a small, rural agency:

We have two people that quit. Two supervisors that were equal to me. The chief picked me out of them. Now, instead of them saying, well, the chief feels that I'm more qualified for whatever reason, he had the innuendoes that the Black community pressured him. I can't speak for them, I guess they assumed that they should have been given the position because they were better than me or better qualified. I don't know what they felt that made them more qualified. We had been in law enforcement for about the same period of time. But as far as education, I had them all by far. The female, I had been working with her since like '82-'83. I was very disappointed when she quit because I knew her and I liked her, and I still do. But she had a reason. She had prepared for the meeting [and] she interrupted the meeting and handed out a letter to everybody in the department; she quit on the spot. It just took all of the fire out of the joy at the time . . . at the time the promotion wasn't fun to get. The male, he left also, and he was very disheartened. Well, I spoke to him right after, and he said, "you know you don't deserve this position, and I got the fucking balls to tell you that" - and this is, I'm quoting him - "I have the fucking balls to tell you that and I'm getting away from this place." And he did quit. I just wished they would have given me a chance to see what I do, and if I didn't do it, then I could see them quitting. But to quit a job making \$35,000-\$36,000 a year

without another job just because I got promoted doesn't make sense. (45)

This respondent searches for reasons that are possibly related to why the two officers quit, but must conclude that his race and consequent perceptions of his ability were determining factors. Because he is one of only two Black officers in a community that is 45 percent Black, White officers are not used to dealing with Black officers in command roles. In his experience, therefore, White officers did not acknowledge his education, experience or other positive qualities but betrayed his perception of friendship and trust that had resulted from years of working together. White officers declined his friendship, denied past racial injustice in the town and refused to support his promotion as something he deserved or as part of a just solution to continuing marginalization of Black people in the community.

A very similar response is discussed by respondents from an urban department with Black leadership, "I'm sure a lot of it's race. You should have seen the White police officers bail out after he [assumed leadership]. Quit. Cause, and they'll tell you, 'I ain't working for a Black man'" (18). Respondents discuss their amazement that White officers quit well paying, secure jobs simply because their commanding officer or supervisor is a Black person.

Management Of Racial Difference

The preceding discussion illustrates that American society operates on the basis of the perceived differences

of race and ethnicity. Physical segregation has long been legitimized through ideological differentiating; White people's dominance maintained by isolating and suppressing Black people and legitimizing these practices as just. This includes the formation of ideological notions that there are inherent differences between White and Black people based on their biological and/or cultural distinctiveness.

Overemphasis On Difference

Half of the respondents discuss the tendency of White people to overemphasize differences in people due to their race. Encounters illustrate to respondents that White people's initial reactions to Black police officers take on an almost, "Who are you?" quality, as if White people have a hard time understanding Black people can occupy positions of responsibility. When Black officers first entered policing in great numbers in the 1970s they encountered White officers who refused to acknowledge that Black people could and should be police officers:

Well, officers didn't want to go. They canceled you on the calls when you were going to assist them or something. They'd cancel you before you'd get there and they would never meet with you, and that sort of thing, and yea, those were some eye-opening moments. (10)

Rather than accept backup or support from a fellow officer, White officers would act as if Black officers did not exist, or should not exist. Male respondents encountered this form of racism throughout the 1960s and 1970s while

female respondents discuss similar experiences as occurring well into the 1980s. Black officers encountered similar responses when they attempted to aid White citizens:

When I went into some White communities. "Ugh, mom there's a Nigger policeman coming up." Is there a problem here? "No, no, no there's not a problem here." And as soon as I got in my car there was a call for service at the same address. (7)

Currently, many respondents, depending on the location of their agency and the number of Black officers working there, report greater respect and acceptance from their fellow officers. Some agencies develop strategies such as "salt and pepper" (one Black officer partnered with one White officer) teams to promote more trust and unity among officers of different racial and ethnic groups. While members of the public have also become more accustomed to Black officers, the perception of difference and an overemphasis on that difference is still encountered by respondents:

There was a disturbance, I got on the property and it was an older White female. The house was an old cracker barrel-type house, had dogs in the yard and fence around it. She had a problem with her niece and it was a personal family thing and I came and, and she told me to get off her property. That she needed a real deputy, that I was Black and so on and she tried to sic her dogs on me. Oh, she was furious. She could not understand that Black people had progressed so and could be deputies and she had the old mentality, that, that Black people were below and beneath em. (20)

This type of encounter was shared by several officers working in rural areas or in small towns. Furthermore, Black officers in cities report that wealthier White people still

have the tendency to treat them as servants, "in their eyes, all Black people still are lesser than White people are and I have been told by people to go to the back door before" (30). These types of overt reactions by White people instill in Black officers an understanding that they are not regarded merely as police officers, but as police officers who are Black. A deputy chief illustrates how this form of racism is prevalent yet so subtle that only those who have experienced racism can understand it as such:

It's been my experience that if I'm with a White officer and somebody comes up to ask assistance, if it's a White person, they go to the White officer. They automatically go to the White officer. If it's a Black person, they tend to go either way unless it's a Black person who does not like Whites. But the average Black person, they'll approach the first police officer they can get to. But invariably in dealing with Whites, what I have observed, and I observe it now as a deputy chief- I'm in situations where I was in charge of patrol operations bureau for two years and it's the largest bureau in the department, I had four captains reporting to me, I had 11 lieutenants reporting to me, I had about 24 sergeants reporting to me and 280 plus police officers that I was responsible for. So I would go out when things were happening of significance, you know, a robbery or something like that and I would see people defer to people of lesser rank if I'm standing there next to a White person. Part of that is people not identifying the rank structure, but generally speaking when you're dealing with Whites, they tend to do that. (26)

As blackness is related to notions of inferiority, many Black officers experience being treated, both subtly and overtly, as if they are less able to perform their jobs. Despite repeated attempts to evaluate and understand other

factors involved in the behavior of White people, rank structure in the above example, many respondents conclude that race is the persistent determining factor. A female respondents illustrates how race supersedes gender in the public's overemphasizing of differences:

Two of us go up on a call and you're White. The call's mine, I get there first. They going to come right past me and talk to you. What they'll do, though, say if it's two females, they'll go to her, invariably go to her, every time.(8)

Another female respondent illustrates a more complex interaction of race and gender in creating perceptions of difference. Traditional notions of policing as a male occupation foster an overemphasis on differences between male and female officers despite research which shows that female officers perform as well or better than their male counterparts. Combined with ideological constructs of Black inferiority, the effect is to maintain low numbers of Black women officers in policing and suppress their advancement through the ranks:

In general. If they have to choose working with somebody Black, they're going to choose a Black male. Oh sure, over a Black female. I always tell people that I'm the scum of the earth as far as the world is concerned. I'm not only female, I'm a Black female. (1)

Female respondents note their treatment at the hands of both White and some Black male officers as negative and detrimental to the formation of a positive sense of self-worth. Both they and Black male officers discuss feeling that they have to perform their duties at a level above male

and White officers, respectively, in order to receive the slightest recognition of both their competency and their unique achievements.

Twice As Good

Seventeen respondents (34 percent) comment that, "as Black police officers you have to be twice as knowledgeable about the job in order to get the same recognition" (35). Ideological constructions of Black intellectual inferiority and incompetency are so frequently encountered by officers that they understand that White people expect them to fail or at least perform a task poorly. As a consequence, respondents feel with much consternation that despite their best efforts, the agencies in which they work, command and supervisory officers, repeatedly fail to recognize the quality of the work they do.

Previous discussion examined differences in rewards, discipline and promotions between Black and White officers. At this point it is important to understand how these differences are related to constructions of White officer superiority. "Black officers give that second effort. They expect you to give 110 percent while White officers can only give 50 percent and get as much credit as you for his 50 percent as you do for your 110 percent. It's that way" (43). Viewed as less able, These Black officers felt they are more scrutinized, more is expected from them and, as a result,

they feel a need to constantly push themselves to meet goals which they know may never be met.

Notions of Black incompetency extend to Black command staff as well; supervisors and leaders similarly experience being regarded as less competent than their White counterparts. Many respondents' comments illustrated that they understand that many White people feel they are not deserving of the positions they fill, and that the only reason they are in those positions is because they were given to them, not because they earned it:

Most White officers do not have to prove themselves, they just have to be there, and a lot of the Black officers have to prove themselves not only worthy of the position of an officer of authority but that they are competent enough to do the job. And you don't only have to prove that to the department in which you work, you have to prove it to the community, not only the White community, to the Black community. And a lot of Blacks you see in a high ranking position it's perceived they had to put a Black there, so I guess he was lucky enough to get it. And if you see a White officer in a high position, you automatically assume he was sharp and he really moved up, and a lot of times, you see a Black man in that position, you say, well, you know, affirmative action or they had to put a Black in that position, so they picked that person and that doesn't mean he's necessarily smart enough to be there. (45)

It is important to note that these constructions (re)create a relational hierarchy of ability in which White is always perceived of as superior to Black. White people, consequently, are better suited to the intellectual demands and the requirements of authority of the police occupational role. It appears natural, therefore, for Black and White citizens to expect that, when they encounter the police,

they will encounter White officers. These Black officers feel they must continually prove themselves to other officers, to members of the communities they police and, ultimately, to themselves.

Further, due to the historically oppressive relationship of the police to Black communities and the subsequent high expectations of Black citizens for Black officers to reduce abuse, respondents feel that they must work extra hard to prove their worth in Black communities:

In some aspect, because, see, we have to live a double standard, and one of those standards is we have to bust our butt and work twice as hard as a White officer to be accepted in the department and make sure that we make it. Then you've got to work three times as hard to convince the African American community that you're not a sell-out and you're truly there to do a job and to do the best that you can to help them. Because the distrust of police officers has been there so long. (3)

Similarly, female respondents report facing ideological constructions which overemphasize their racial differences and push them to work twice as hard in order to get recognition. Further, many report facing notions that, as women, they are inherently less capable than their male counterparts. Often this results in women officers performing occupational functions as if they were men instead of combining the occupational role with their unique traits and capabilities to create a uniquely feminine style of policing. One female respondent discussed what she sees in her agency:

You have the small woman effect. You've got that female that whether she's Black or White, she's always gotta prove something and she escalates the situation wherever she goes because she's so busy trying to prove to the males that she can handle the job and she's gonna get somebody killed or herself. (20)

Respondents describe how they encounter others daily who treat them as if they are not good enough to be in the position they fill, and that the job they do is never good enough. Comments, encounters, dirty looks and the attitudes of White people allow these officers to understand processes which are designed to define them as inferior and then suppress their advancement because of this inferiority.

Ethnization of Tasks

In fact, advancement for Black officers has been limited historically to positions which have been defined as Black positions. Before the 1970s, Black officers were only allowed to police Black communities and arrest Black citizens. Older officers describe a time when they weren't allowed to arrest White people and many of them can recall the first time a Black officer in their agency arrested a White person. Thirteen officers (26 percent) discuss how, although overtly racial barriers have been overcome, the process of assignment by race persists. One respondent maintains that, "It's no accident that probably 98 percent of the Black officers in patrol are assigned to the Black communities. That means it's no coincidence" (14).

As discussed in Chapter three, respondents argue that Black officers are better able to understand Black communities because they were socialized to understand, what they describe as, Black culture. However, they feel that this should not limit them to patrolling Black communities for the entirety of their careers. Ethnization is rooted in the overemphasis of difference and fails to recognize that White officers can be trained to work in Black communities and Black officers can work in White communities. Further, it contains Black officers to limited sections in policing and limits their advancement to other desirable, specialized assignments. Promotion, salary, recognition and feelings of self-worth are all, therefore, compromised. Further, a lack of Black officers in important positions within the agency means fewer mentors for younger Black officers and works to (re)create existing patterns of ethnization.

Ethnization is also found in positions which have remained the purview of White officers, such as K-9 and marine patrol, that Black officers have not been able to penetrate. However, ethnization of tasks can mean more than position, rank or assignment. One respondent further argues that, at least in his rural area, Black officers are dispatched to more dangerous calls than White officers:

I can lay in my bed at night and listen to the dispatcher. White officers are dispatched to certain calls and Black officers are dispatched to others. If its a situation where they think one

may get hurt, injured or something of that nature, they're going to send that Black officer first. Especially if it is out in the boondocks, they'll give the Black officer a far enough lead on that White officers so they can say well you need to go as backup. Making sure the Black officer gets there first so if there is hostility, he is going to catch it first before the White officer arrives. (43)

Continuing policies which overemphasize difference and create specialized tasks according to race are similarly encountered by women who report a "genderization" of tasks. Gender roles in the general society are (re)produced in policing with women being assigned to positions which are merely supportive or limited to working with women. The following comments describe this process and discuss how it is internalized by both men and women:

It's male-oriented, male-dominated, if you're a woman, you can only work certain jobs. When you defy that, you're seen as masculine or some other type of problem with you, power hungry. If you're not sleeping with everybody to move up and do it on your own merit, my education and so forth, you're also seen as a problem. That's from the male's prospective. From the women's prospective, you're just not capable because you're not a man. You could have more education, more training, but you'll never be good enough. (20)

When respondents make an effort to show their abilities and prove their usefulness to their agency, they meet resistance, are defined as people with problems and reminded that they are not equal to male and/or White officers. These women are supposed to fulfill the tasks they are perceived of as being able to fulfill and nothing more. One respondent notes the irony of this process which has historically

marginalized women in ~~most~~ occupations, and now that they have entered policing, seeks to create genderized policing roles within law enforcement agencies which limit their advancement:

If a victim is a female and it's a sex crime, they call me or they call [another female officer]. They haven't had one in 25 years up here, so what did they do when the other ones came and we weren't here? They've forgotten. (41)

Mistrusting Unity Between Black People

By denying that racism exists and promoting an understanding of the world from the majority's point of view--that everything is OK--respondents report that White people are able to dismiss Black people's understanding of persisting racism. Collectivity was shown earlier to be a strategy of resistance that respondents feel necessary to combat racism. In respondents' experiences, White people responded to these collectivities with fear and anger; as if threatened by the efforts of Black people to improve their lot in life. Black officer unions, for example, have been attacked as being unnecessary and discriminatory.

Beyond organized Black collectivities, however, ten respondents (20 percent) reported experiencing how White-dominated agencies and White officers feel threatened by the mere presence of Black officers working together. Seemingly, White officers perceive any group of Black officers a potential threat to their structural and ideological

hegemony and seek to keep them isolated from each other. A supervisor recounts a recent occurrence:

We were about half and half, and it was pointed out to me at that time by my supervisor that we needed to transfer some people off my squad because nobody wanted it to look like all the Blacks were being put on my squad, even though there were other squads that were either all White or either one Black. So it's just, see, that thing about race is always there and people, I mean what was wrong with a squad that just happened to have been all Black? What would have been wrong with that if, when we put on our uniforms we were just police officers? (14)

Her question arises in response to her evaluation of the contradiction between White notions that racism is a myth and nonsensical practices which (re)produce racial differences. If racism were in fact dead, would not it be acceptable to have an all Black squad or department for that matter? However, many respondents maintain that persistent racism forces White officers to regard a 50 percent Black officer squad as threatening and, therefore, something which must be dissolved.

Similarly, in many of the respondents experiences, White officers fear Black officer unity with members of Black communities and feel that Black officers can only be "real" officers to the extent they are not Black. Older, more experienced Black officers feel that younger Black officers come to be pressured by White officers to prove that they are, in fact, police officers by engaging in abusive behavior against Black citizens. If they reject this

behavior, they are often defined as problems and face retaliation. The following respondent discusses how he faced an experience in which, despite his best intentions, his ability to perform his job was negatively impacted by White expectations that he could only be loyal to the Black community or the department, not both:

We had a White officer that allegedly beat a Black male with a flashlight. And the Black male received forty something staples in his head. And I was the supervisor at the time. I came to the scene and I sent the officers away from the scene and I stayed there and handled it. I was the only Black officer there at that scene. Now I used my head when I sent them away. I knew what I was doing. Now I'm going to show you how Blacks can be scrutinized. These are fellow officers. I'm looking out for their safety and the safety of the citizens. Okay. Now, you've got a large Black crowd accumulating, you've got a Black male that's bleeding. You've got two White officers standing over him. Now you got about 50 Blacks coming up. The smartest thing to do is to get those two White officers out of there before more Blacks come and say, "there they are, let's get them!" It could create a riot situation. Okay? So I got them out of there. Now, my White officers, assumed that I got them out of there so I could solicit complaints. You get what I'm saying? I got them out of there so they wouldn't get killed or have to kill anyone. And I calmed the people down. It worked. We did not have a riot. I told the people, I said, "well, if you think they are wrong, we'll look into it. And if they are, we will deal with that." But I had to do anything I could do to calm those people down and I knew these people, and I knew what I needed to do . . . Now, these officers wrote complaints on me, which they were unfounded, but this is how you're scrutinized...They didn't look at me as an officer, they didn't look at me as trying to calm the situation down, they looked at me as a Black just like these people. (45)

Attempting to perform his job to the best of his ability and dissolve a potentially violent situation, this officer was perceived by White officers as siding with the Black community against his agency. Until the time he testified in court several months later, he was completely ostracized by fellow officers, chastised publicly by his chief and forced to the brink of resignation. In his experience, efforts to contain the Black population are threatened by unity among Black officers and members of Black communities they police.

Pacification

Essed (1991) argues that pacification seeks to contain opposition to everyday racism by reducing motivation to resist. White people seek to contain opposition by arguing that they are not racist while maintaining strict supervision of Black people to control their actions. This has the dual effect of taking the moral high ground by claiming no responsibility for racism while (re)producing policies which limit the ability of Black people to question those claims.

Expecting Gratitude

One form of pacification occurs when members of the dominant group seek to demonstrate to Black people that they are concerned for the plight of Black people while demanding that Black people acknowledge this concern and express

gratitude. Five respondents (10 percent) discuss how they have experienced this demand in various ways. One respondent discusses a memorable encounter that forever changed his relationship with a superior officer:

When I was a sergeant my lieutenant called me in and asked me to move a desk for him. I was like, well I can call some of the maintenance guys, that's part of their job description. I don't think its something we normally expect our sergeants to do. He said, "well ask some of your guys." I refused because I didn't want to lose credibility with the men. It was like he wanted me to do something subservient to justify why I'd gotten ahead. He said, "after all I've done for your black ass, you won't do this for me?" he eventually asked a White woman to do it for him and I think that she did it. (21)

Many respondents share experiencing that individual White officers expect demonstrations of gratitude such as this to reinforce their dominant positions and prove their social largess to Black officers. They further report that other White officers, on the other hand, do not feel that Black people should be police officers, feel that they cannot do a credible job and, therefore, should be grateful that they have a job at all. One respondent discusses how he arrived at this conclusion by listening to the comments of White officers during training sessions:

Some of the guys at the agency there are used to the good old boy type network you know we are suppose to be happy with just being given whatever we get, we shouldn't want to be supervisors, we shouldn't want to go to impact positions. (28)

Respondents report that White expectations of gratitude therefore reflect other ideological constructions of Black

inferiority and further seek to contain the advancement of Black officers while limiting their opposition to current racist practices. Beyond expectations of gratitude, maintaining strict, daily control over the movements and behaviors of Black officers is experienced by respondents as an effective means of pacification.

To Keep Close Control

Black officers in the 1960s and 1970s faced encounters daily which sought to monitor them, control their actions, make them feel uncomfortable and unwanted and, eventually, force them out of policing. One recounts the atmosphere he worked in:

Very harsh. Very harsh. Everything was trial and error . . . You were not instructed on things or told how to do things. You were basically just put there and left alone and when something went wrong they were really on your ass. You know, trying to build pressure on you and run you off. . He'd just write you up. And see when you start doing stuff like that that what you're doing is generating a paper trail and you really want to try to hurt somebody and start a bad personnel jacket on them and that's basically what you're doing there. (39)

This officer was not properly trained or instructed. White officers felt, or hoped, that the forces uniting to hire Black officers would wane and there would be no need to spend time or money preparing these officers for the occupational requirements of policing. Further, when questions or issues arose, Black officers had no one to turn to for help or guidance. White officers isolated them and hoped they would fail while superior officers fostered a work environment designed to push them into failing. Close,

strict supervision of every act combined with the generation of a paper trail were methods used to let Black officers know that they were not considered equal nor wanted.

Although respondents' discussions illustrate that overt behaviors have diminished in most agencies, close control and monitoring are reported by eighteen respondents (36 percent) as commonplace. Respondents link the notion of having to be "twice as good" as White officers to practices by which they report being more closely watched by supervising officers. These practices can be subtle. Superior officers have to supervise the officers under them; however, respondents argue that the differential monitoring of Black officers results in an accumulation of a paper trail in their personnel files which may be used against them later on. One female respondent discusses her experiences with close supervision:

I had one supervisor that I just didn't feel real comfortable with him, you know. He talked to everybody, but he didn't say much to me at all. Everything I handed him, it was double and triple checked and every call I went on, he was making sure that I was there and, you know, it was a real uncomfortable thing to have to deal with, but he never said anything, you know, to make me think that he was against me because of my race or my gender. If you look at it from the administrative standpoint, he was just doing his job. But then if you're out there and you look at the fact that he's not doing this to anybody else but you, it kind of makes you wonder. No one else was getting the treatment that I was getting. In fact, other people were doing things that they probably should have been disciplined for and I was pretty much doing everything right, but yet I was the person that was under the magnifying glass.(30)

This discussion illustrates how respondents feel that, in the performance of administrative functions, superior officers can allow subjective interpretations of race and/or gender to influence their performance of their duties as well as the interpersonal relationships they maintain with subordinate officers. By comparing her supervisor's actions and interactions with herself and others, this respondent determined that something was amiss. These types of encounters lower the comfort level of officers and, perhaps more importantly, produce conditions by which their personnel files inhibit them from advancement or from assignment to specialized positions and/or training programs. The net result is either their containment in a limited aspect of policing or their termination.

To this point respondents discuss ideological constructions and the attitudinal manifestations of these constructions which define them as less competent and serve to justify practices which limit them to particular sections of policing with little reward or hope of advancement. Both constructions and practices have been shown to be persistent in intent although forms have been altered. In the following sections respondents' comments will show more overt forms of racism which seek to maintain them in secondary positions through verbal and physical force.

Denial Of Dignity

Black Americans have long resisted efforts which seek to contain them in subordinate positions in society. Through the sharing of knowledge, preparation for the future and strength in collectivities, Black people have engaged in a protracted struggle against racism. White people, and the institutions they have historically controlled, respond with racist practices which work to maintain Black people in subordinate positions. The first of these ideologically, "repudiate[s] the human dignity of Blacks, as individuals and as a people" (Essed, 1991: 247).

Insensitivity, Belittlement and Humiliation

Eighteen respondents (36 percent) report experiences in which White people sought to enforce their superior position by treating them or other Black people with contempt and disrespect. One respondent discusses his experience with the insensitivity of a White officer and the effect it had upon his family:

As a child, I remember [a] confrontation that my father had with the County Highway Patrol. At the time, I think he was attempting to teach my mother how to drive, and the deputy pulled behind him and stopped him, and it was right in front of our house at the time. And he, it was not a pleasant experience shall I say, to the point of actually threatening to put my father in jail and carrying us off to shelters, etc. [Just] teaching her, trying to teach her how to drive and I don't know whether that had an impact on her, but she still doesn't drive. (34)

A day of family unity and of a mother learning to drive turned into an unforgettable traumatic experience in which a White officer threatened the parents with jail time and the loss of their children. Respondents use these types of experiences to, not only understand the operation of racism, but to guide their job performance as well. Many offered examples of how past White insensitivity has allowed them to treat people with respect and dignity. One respondent discusses how he and partner almost came to blows over the treatment of a poor family:

[White officers] don't care about people and how things affect people. Okay. Well I've never been like that. As an example, we stopped a guy who had an old Chevrolet, and I do mean old. He had four or five little kids in it over in the projects and we stopped him because the car smoked and [the city] has an anti-smoke ordinance on car smoking at that particular time. So, we stopped him and in just looking at the guy I says, "man I'm not gonna give this guy you know a \$50 ticket when he's got four or five little kids and you can tell they don't have a whole lot and he's driving this old ragged car that's smoking like a house on fire." He's probably doing the best he can do. You know what I mean? And we got into a real argument about that. To the point that he said, "I'm not riding with you anymore, let's call the sergeant." I said, "you do whatever you want to do," because I was the senior officer in the car anyway and I said, "No," you know, "I'm not writing him no ticket and you're not." (9)

Past experiences with poverty and the insensitivity of White police officers shapes the discretionary behavior of this officer. He uses empathy to place himself in the position of the guy driving the car and imagines, not only what his life must be like, but the effect of a ticket on

his family. It is particularly important that, having experienced such encounters as a young person, he considers the effect of his treatment of the father on the children. In fact, respondents repeatedly argue that their past experiences give them greater insight into behavior and allows them to be more "human" than White officers:

We handle the Black community completely different than White officers. Because most of us older cops understood abuse, we understood we have been victimized so we made up our mind we were not go out and abuse. No we did our jobs. We didn't make these petty arrests especially with Black youth, we sent them home to their mama. A lot of times White cops would arrest the fathers in front of their kids and was always roughing them and always handcuffing them and the kids would start crying. I saw that too many times in my life we got enough problems without taking those fathers. A lot of those young White guys, they didn't care because they didn't look at them as humans. (25)

The use of past experiences with White insensitivity to understand its affects and deal with present insensitivity is an important theme among respondents. A female detective discusses how past experiences allowed her to treat a sexual battery victim with respect while White detectives would not:

I'm always talking to girls about teenage pregnancy because I was a victim of teenage pregnancy, I'm always trying to use myself as a role model. I took a girl home day before yesterday that sat in this office, she reported an attempt of sexual battery and when you talk about victims being treated differently. Well they interviewed her. She's sitting and she's holding her head and I knew she had been there over an hour and they were through with her and I said, "Well, honey what you waiting on?" And she said, "Well, I'm waiting on somebody to take me home." And I got real offended by that because she's a victim, she's been through enough, why are you

making her sit here? It was early in the morning, she probably had had nothing to eat, she was walking on the back of her shoes, she was not dressed properly. The way that she looked, the way that she presented herself, she was a very introverted person, you know, she wouldn't speak out, she wouldn't speak up and nobody cared, they just looked over her which was wrong. (22)

Respondents discuss the differential treatment of Black suspects, offenders and victims of crimes. The respondent above maintains that White victims of sexual assault receive better treatment. Other respondents note similar differential treatment of Black people whose property has been stolen or who have lost family members to violent crimes. The effect of this form of racism is experienced as a dismissal of the importance of their experiences relative to similar experiences of White people and the denial of the dignity they should be afforded as human beings.

The experiential-racism tradition maintains that White insensitivity results from both ideological constructions of Black inferiority and the physical segregation that prevents them from encountering and coming to know Black people. The result of this insensitivity is the (re)production of racial differences on a daily basis whether intentionally or otherwise. Further, respondents discuss how they still encounter attempts by White people to deny them their dignity. Humiliation, for example, is a form of racism related to insensitivity to the extent it serves to define

Black people as inferior and maintain their subordinate status in American society.

An officer in a rural town describes an extended case of racist harassment in which he was threatened, ignored and his credibility attacked publicly. The incident that led to this series of events is discussed earlier in this chapter; however, at this point it is important to note feelings of humiliation suffered by the respondent when publicly accused of inventing the whole affair and being asked to take a polygraph test to prove he was not lying:

I never felt like a victim. I felt like I had to defend myself the whole time, even after that. And if I get emotional, excuse me. You remember [the city commissioner when] the derogatory note passed around [town]. That could have been politically motivated. The State Attorney never asked him to take a polygraph to make sure that he had nothing to do with that. What makes him more credible than me. I was asked by the State Attorney's office to take a polygraph to prove that I did not put the note on my car. Yes sir. Now, can you imagine how insulted I was? I was insulted when I found the note. I was insulted when the chief treated the investigation the way he did. I was insulted when the State Attorney asked me to take a polygraph. I have never been vindicated for this. (45)

This respondent's comments illustrates how, in his experience, White people are deemed more credible than Black people and the latter's experiences deemed unimportant. In the face of overtly racist harassment, this officer received no sympathy and was challenged by various White administrators in positions of authority to prove that he was, in fact, victimized. His refusal to take a polygraph test to prove his innocence in this incident was considered

admission that he was at fault and used as proof that no racial animosity existed in the agency, aside from respondent.

It is essential to note the effects of humiliation are difficult to measure, but clearly long-lasting. Such experiences, in light of the important occupational role respondents play in society, are particularly detrimental to their self-images as well as to the image of Black people in general. One respondent discusses belittling experiences encountered frequently while shopping:

I mean, it's like I can go into a department store, now here I am a lieutenant on the police department, I work in Internal Affairs, I go in a department store on a Saturday and I got to stand in line for 15 minutes while they are trying to verify my identification and my check. And I know why that is. Now they can't say that it's their procedure because I watch them. And then somebody else who is of a different race goes up there and they are cleared just like that. So how do you forget when you are reminded, you know, it would be nice to forget, but you can't because you're confronted with it all the time? (14)

Respondents feel that they are treated in a manner which reflects the inability of White people to think of them as intelligent, responsible human beings. They report that they face greater scrutiny in stores and are further treated differentially if they live in integrated neighborhoods. One respondent notes how, despite being normally calm and even-minded, she became furious when an officer from another agency treated her as if she were a

criminal breaking into her own home in a predominantly White neighborhood:

I was dressed in a robe and the officer thought I was breaking into my house. He approached my garage and saw my car and backed off. But as a citizen, I'm not treated as I should be. He saw my color and assumed that I could not live in that subdivision. (17)

After an initial tense situation, the officer noted a police car parked in her garage and thought better of continuing his investigation. Still furious, she complained to his supervisor with little tangible results. She, therefore, felt belittled by both the initial, ridiculous interaction and the response she received after complaining. She concludes that despite the humiliation she still feels when reflecting on the encounter, it could have been much worse if she had not been recognized as a police officer.

Intimidation

The second form of White people's response to the actions of Black people which seeks to maintain their subordinate position in the US is intimidation, described as "instrumental in the enforcement of compliance with the system" (Essed, 1991: 250). As with practices which deny human dignity, intimidation has an ideological form which continually (re)produces stereotypical notions of Black people through ridicule and reinforces White consensus through a shared understanding of jokes. However, intimidation can be further manifested as physical attacks,

which threaten the safety of Black people, or continual harassment:

Hostility

It was pretty intense and I remember that period well and it was such an eye opener because I didn't think at that time that you were Black or White, I just, I really believed that you were blue. I really believed that we were all out here to accomplish the same thing and we would be dependent upon each other to do the same job, which is a very critical job. I never imagined that there would such hostility and disdain. I had to just endure a lot of the situations whether they were subtle situations or whether that they were very overt, negative, hostile situations.(10)

The preceding comments set the tone for this section. Although it has been shown that Black people share an awareness of racism, respondents seemingly shared a notion that, by becoming police officers, they were moving ahead and leaving behind a racist past. Most had heard of the strong fraternal unity of officers exemplified by "blue codes" and felt that they would be similarly accepted and made to feel at home. They soon learned, however, that they were not wanted and experienced daily assaults with a wide range of attitudes and behaviors which sought to intimidate them and force them to quit.

Harassment

Respondents who became officers in the 1960s and 1970s reported that White officers, seemingly intoxicated by their authority, supported by agency leaders and determined to keep Black people out of policing pelted Black officers with

nonstop insults and did everything possible to force them out of policing. As the first Black women officer in her city, the following respondent suffered incessant harassment:

I stopped wearing my hair in an afro, I stopped wearing Jontue, then I was called Watermelon Wanda, because you very well know all Blacks eat watermelon. So, there was nothing I could do to basically get rid of the prejudices that were there in the department. When I started out, we had a department procedure in which you get on the police radio. You give your call number, whatever you're riding that particular day, and you break, HQ 11-15, HQ come back in response 11-15, then you tell them what you have. But in that proper respect, I could not do that, because as soon as they heard my voice on the radio, they would start clicking, and I could not get back on. I could have been getting my butt kicked or anything could have happened, but they didn't care, they just resented the fact that I was there.(6)

Crying as she recounted the trauma of having to come to work at this time, she discusses the humiliation of being subject to never ending attacks on her physical appearance and the fear of not being sure she would receive back-up in the event of a dangerous situation. The harassment she faced was motivated and manifested by her race and gender. She comments on the importance of race by expressing her gratitude to the Black male officers who supporting her, backed her up and helped her survive through these very trying times. Her discussion illustrates the unique position of Black women in their agencies. They report facing racialized harassment from White people because of their

race and sexual harassment from men who wish to keep women in subordinate positions relative to men.

Twenty respondents (40 percent) discuss incidents of racial harassment that have occurred over the course of their careers. The respondent who earlier discussed how his fellow officers ostracized him because of their misperceptions of his ties with the Black community discusses how he faced varying methods of harassment to keep him quiet:

I got a note on my car, "Nigger we want you away from here. You like the [town] niggers too much." I don't know who did it, I don't like to point fingers at anyone . . . then I came to work, and when I got there in my box I had four internals being investigated on me. The day before I was supposed to give testimony . . . All from different officers. All worked under me. But the internals were all thrown out . . . They assumed because I was Black, that I was going to go in the grand jury and say--they thought I was going to go in there and just hammer him. (45)

This experience demonstrates the extent some White people might go to keep Black people in "their place," but it further illustrates the comfort level of many White people in referring to Black people by using derogatory language and terminology.

Racist Talk, Jokes and Cartoons

Half of the respondents discuss encounters in which White people use racist language in everyday conversational settings to refer to Black people. The fact that encounters with these derogatory terms are experienced so frequently

and used by many White people so freely demonstrates to respondents the extent of racism shared by White people. Racist talk functions to promote White solidarity through (re)creating an outside "other" which is constantly derided. Older respondents note how racist talk was commonplace when they first joined their agencies:

When I first started it was nothing to hear the word "Nigger" on the radio. I mean, that was common, because everybody hadn't gotten the word, apparently, that there were some African Americans listening now. Then they went from that to a term that some guy used when he referred to a car with more than 2 Blacks in it as a load of coal. The first time I heard that, I thought, "why that son of a bitch," I know what he just said. And then they'd say, "a load of milk." They just substituted "Nigger" for a load of milk. And I knew that. And a lot of that went on. And then if they realized that I was working, they'd come to me and tell me, well we didn't mean you. And I thought to myself, "what a damn asshole, you meant me." (46)

Although the terminology was flexibly altered by White officers according to their needs, the shared meaning and intent of the terminology remained constant. This example clearly illustrates an important point stressed throughout many respondents' discussions, that although overt forms of racist behavior are less visible, the attitudes of White officers have not dramatically changed. In this case White officers' awareness of the repercussions of their language usage first alter it to cover their intent and then apologize to Black officers saying, "we didn't mean you." Drawing upon his experiences, however, this respondent understands that they did mean him. A supportive example is

provided by another respondent while recounting how White officers talked about him as if he did not mind being insulted:

Well, take for instance my first day. I reported and was told that I'd be riding with another officer who was gonna show me around. There was another trooper in the median and as we, he pulled over into the median to see that trooper to talk, he looked over and saw, you know, that there was another new trooper there and he said it as a joke, but, you know, it wasn't funny at the time, he used the word Nigger, "Oh that's just what we need, another fucking Nigger," you know, and laughed and they laughed and carried on and I looked and they could see I wasn't laughing, so they kind of . . . But I knew they were accustomed to saying that and telling jokes that way and felt comfortable with it and thought that it was not going to be taken offensively. But, in a period of time, that became taboo and, you know, we really made a lot of progress. Other than that, it's just been, you know, vibes and hearing things from another office when someone doesn't know you're there and stuff like that. (42)

Discussions indicate that White officers were clearly comfortable with racist talk and apparently unaware that Black people did not share their notions. Once changes began to be made and enforced, racist talk ceased in front of Black officers yet continued behind closed doors. Another respondent develops support for this understanding while discussing recent experiences:

Not directly. Indirectly you got those names. What I mean is behind your back basically. You would probably hear them talking about you or another Black officer as you passed by an open door, a cracked door or you may have been standing nearby a crowd of White supervisors or White officers and you would hear that word. (39)

Racist talk occurs as White people vent their anger and frustrations involving Black people, it occurs as gossip and, when White people let their guard down, it occurs in normal conversation:

I've experienced some of the things that I consider to be racism. I was standing there talking with a sergeant and one of the relief guys who happened to be White and the sergeant was White and I was the only Black guy there, but you know, how you get accustomed to talking to people and you forget their identity, their culture, it's just a person you're talking to. So he and I were talking and this White guy came up and says, "Sarge, where do I go on my relief duty?" And the sarge, without hesitation, he says, "You got the back fence over there, but the only thing you gotta worry about is them little Nigger boys trying to climb through the fence." And he looked over at me and he says "Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to say that." I said, "Well, I know how you are, it's all right." And I did know how he was, you know, I knew his bent, I knew his bent. (27)

The comfort level with which White people revert to racist talk is clearly an indication of the extent with which they understand and employ racist constructions to converse about daily occurrences in their lives. Often respondents describe being torn between anger at the insulting nature of the language they are subjected to and pity for the White officers who try to maintain a facade only to be given away in moments of weakness.

However, respondents express nothing but disdain for racist jokes and cartoons shared by White officers which serve to denigrate Black people, to reinforce White superiority and to intimidate Black people. Eighteen

respondents (36 percent) discuss how their agencies have historically incorporated jokes into daily departmental routine. The following discussion illustrates how role calls have traditionally served as the setting for racist jokes. This ritualistic telling of "the joke" promotes White officer solidarity, (re)produces a shared understanding of the position of minority groups in America and informs Black officers how they are perceived of by White people. It further passes on the message that Black people occupy a certain place in society:

We had roll calls where everybody would meet at whatever the designated time was for you to start work. There was a long-standing tradition that someone would have the joke for the night. All the ones I've heard, about a month's worth of jokes for the nights that I worked were all racial jokes. And I didn't like it, and I attempted to find a way to deal with it. I was talking with an elderly gentlemen here, and I mentioned it to him, and he said, "well, you can't say nothing, because they may shoot you in the back, but, next time, why don't you tell a joke." And I said, "okay, well I need a joke to tell." And he directed me to another gentleman who was a great storyteller. And there's a guy on the corner, and you know, most people would probably not even consider that the man had any value or what have you. But you know, a real nice man, and he gave me a joke. And I wrote it down, and I rehearsed it and practiced it and got before the mirror, and actually I did it, and it took me several weeks, but once I got the joke down, then I had to deal with my nerve to do it. You have to realize that at our roll call at the time, there could have been 200-300 guys in there at any given time at our roll call, and of that, less than 1/2 of 1 percent was Black. You understand what I'm saying. So, you know, when you tell your joke, you have to come up front and tell it. Well, I had been pondering it for several days, you know, and this one particular night my hand just shot up, and of course, the lieutenant

who was the watch commander, "oh we have a rookie with a joke. Let's bring him on up here." And I told the joke the guy had given me about a White female and a Black male. And after I told the joke, I laughed and the other Black guys almost fell to the floor, but nobody else did. No one said anything. It was just as quiet, like leaving a funeral. And I never heard another joke. (35)

This example is contextually rich in that it demonstrates many themes and experiences developed by respondents: the limited number of Black officers in policing; the sharing of knowledge, ideas and support among Black people; the ideological hegemony of White people which defines Black people, creating a sense of White solidarity through joke telling; and, importantly, hostile reactions of White people when their constructions are turned around and used to illustrate the folly of their "superiority."

Despite the curtailing of jokes in this department, the practice is still reported by respondents who work in smaller departments or who have agency leaders they perceive of as racist. One respondent sought to illustrate the seriousness with which he regarded the racist cartoon found on the departmental beat sheet by reading a letter he had written to the chief:

"On December 3, 1996 this department used a cartoon depicting a slave ship with the caption, 'The better-equipped slave ships, of course, always carried a spare,' on the beat sheet. This department also used stereotyped comments about 'Red Necks.' I find both comments and cartoon in poor taste and offensive. Many of the minorities in this department also agree with my sentiments in voicing concerns. However, many of the

minorities are afraid to verbalize their comments for fear of repercussions. Although we are diverse in our environment, it still seems like we are still promoting racism and negative stereotypes." (24)

Nearing retirement, this officer can afford to be outspoken against this form of racism. Although he recognizes that the department included a "redneck" joke to make the slave cartoon less offensive, he rightly attacks both as unnecessarily promoting negative stereotypes of people that officers are required to interact with on a daily basis. Further, it is important to note that many of the Black officers, although offended, are intimidated by this, and similar behavior, fearing for their jobs if they were to let those feelings be known. They understand that the range of White racism is not limited to jokes or cartoons and wish to avoid more overt forms of racism.

Name Calling and Verbal Threats

Calling Black people racist names is another way White people can (re)produce ideological conceptions of Black people; however, the goal is clearly to denigrate and maintain patterns of subordination. One respondent describes his experiences with this form of racism his first day of work in the mid-1970s:

You know, it was a real strange experience. The very first day that I reported to the police academy on September 17, the sergeant that was out there in charge walked up to me and said, "You fat ass Nigger, get your ass on that damn scale." (3)

Sixteen respondents (32 percent) recount experiences in which they have been called derogatory terms by fellow officers or members of the public. In the early 1980s the practice was so wide-spread in some departments that superior officers would counsel new Black officers on what to expect and how to handle it:

I remember having a conversation with a Captain and he sat me down and he gave me the spiel about, "I want you to know one of the criteria is that you have to have a thick skin. If you can't stand being called a Nigger and still do your job, you don't need to be here cause you're gonna get called all kinds of names." (27)

This superior officer understood what Black officers would be subjected to and wanted to make sure that newer officers would accept the names without retaliating. Some respondents argue that they do not need to be counseled by White superiors because name calling is so frequently encountered that they have developed protective mechanisms against it. One respondent illustrates how:

I've heard that word, must have been well over 10,000 times in my life. But I can't let it affect me, I know who I am, I know what I can do, I know what I have, I know what I've accomplished and no one can take that away from me. (16)

However, the majority of the respondents recount how they refuse to accept name calling in the occupational setting and have, at least one memorable time, forcefully challenged name callers to cease or face the consequences of

their actions. One respondent discusses her reaction to name calling at a agency party:

I had a White supervisor and she made a statement, she had a swimming pool and she said, "I just got my pool cleaned, [and now] I let you niggers get in my pool." And at that time, my immediate reactions told me to hit her. (23)

She was restrained and later filed a complaint with a superior officer that was dismissed. The only action taken was that the Black officer was transferred to another supervisor. Name calling was also reported as being gender oriented. One respondent commented how, "I've had suspects say, 'Bitch, you should be home having babies'" (47). This form of name calling seems to be even more common in most agencies than racist name calling. Agencies seem to be slower in protecting women from such forms of intimidation and women officers lack the political strength in departments to successfully combat sexist practices. A respondent originally from a northern state discusses her understanding of how men generally talk with her in ways which diminish her status relative to them:

One young man sat right here, and said, "hey girl, how's it going?" And I said, "how old are you?" He said, "twenty-something." I said, "I'm forty-one. I don't think you're old enough to call me girl. How old do I have to be before I'm no longer girl and become woman?" Everybody calls you girl. One White guy called me a colored gal. Now I laughed, I thought that was so cute. I had never heard that before. (8)

Her reaction to the genderized racial name calling was to dismiss it as cute because the White man was elderly and

not perceived of as a threat. However, other forms of comments, although not containing names, imply threats which respondents feel must be taken seriously. These comments seek to enforce the racial status quo by letting Black people know their place. A female respondent recounts such a comment directed at her while on patrol:

I had a White lady told me, she said "Aren't you afraid to be out here by yourself?" Because you only rode one man in a car and I was by myself and that was the midnight shift, 2 or 3:00 in the morning. And I said, "I'm not afraid" and she said, "Oh being Black, being out here, you should be afraid." (23)

Name calling and verbal threats are clearly important symbolic weapons used to intimidate Black people while reinforcing their structural and ideological oppression. Richard Delgado argues that, "the racial insult . . . injures the dignity and self-regard of the person to whom it is addressed, communicating the message that distinctions of race are distinctions of merit, dignity, status, and personhood" (1995: 159). That White people understand the superiority vested in their color is further evident by their tendency to act in authoritarian manners and treat Black people as inferior.

Authoritarian Behavior

The first respondent illustrates the seriousness of this form of racism by developing a hypothetical encounter, based on previous training experiences, with a White officer during a training session:

[when a White officer would ask] "Why are Black people so loud when you're dealing with them?" I might give them a separate clarification. "Why do Black offices also feel intimidated by White officers to the respect that they are going to feel that every White officer is going to overexert their power or something?" (49)

Eleven respondents (22 percent) discuss situations in which White officers overexert their authority to intimidate members of the Black public while simultaneously reinforcing their superiority to Black officers:

A White police officer comes on the scene and says, "if you all don't shut up, everybody's going to jail." A Black police officer's been there like ten minutes. He didn't have no problems. Soon as a White police officer says, "you all don't shut up, everybody going to jail," pandemonium broke lose. He took a bunch of folks to jail. And you got the Black police officer saying, I was there, I'm handling it, there was nothing going on. Sure, they were loud, but he's dealing with it. A White police officer comes because they don't shut up instantly, he takes them to jail. (1)

This form of behavior occurs frequently. As another respondent notes, "they would love to let you know that [they're] your superior, you know" (44). Acting on a belief system which maintains that Black people are loud and uncivilized and notions that Black officers are not competent to perform their jobs, White officers treat Black people as their lesser. One respondent notes how this behavior also can be manifested by locally powerful White people who seek to maintain their influence:

It was my home, where I'm from and this son of a bitch didn't want me [there]. Some big time farmer over there, some important person. I stopped his ass when he was drunk and I put him in jail. About

a month later I get a letter from that son of a bitch telling me you got to move out. And I said shit, you got to be joking. (46)

Finally, female respondents note the authoritarian behavior exhibited by males who often, "will jump in ahead because they want to take control of a situation" (47). Acting on learned messages of the secondary importance of women in American society as well as the traditional notion that only males can be effective police officers, male officers often dismiss the ability of women to police and cancel them from calls:

There are certain male officers who will cancel a female officer from their call. We have codes and signals that we use over the radio and if an officer at, at my place of employment they always dispatch two officers to a scene. That male officer, if he gets sent with a female officer he will cancel her because a lot of times they feel if I gotta have a female with me I'll just do it myself. (13)

Many male officers, therefore, assume an authoritarian voice in relation to women which allows them to decide whether or not women can actually perform a required task. If they decide that the answer is no they respond by canceling women from calls or jumping ahead of them to take control of a situation they feel women are not capable of handling. In both racist and sexist manners, authoritarian behavior serves to reinforce existing stratification hierarchies and (re)produce ideological notions of superiority and inferiority.

Physical Violence

Physical violence is an important form of overtly racist behavior which enforces compliance with the societal status quo and further serves as an important reminder to Black people about the extent to which White people will allow them to participate in American society. As police have historically served to control Black communities, there exists in the general framework of Black people's knowledge of racism specific notions of police violence and brutality against Black people.

The topic of police brutality remains one of great concern in police literature. Some criminologists describe a reduction of violent behavior brought on by increased training, notions of professionalization and a reduction in racial tensions. Recently, however, Human Rights Watch, the largest US human rights group, concluded from a study of police behavior in 14 cities that, "brutality was one of the most serious, enduring and divisive human rights violations in the United States [and] members of the Black and Hispanic minorities were the victims in disproportionate numbers" (Wright, 1998: 1).

Discussions of violence by respondents were clearly impacted by occupational factors. Respondents acknowledge an awareness of the historical brutality of police and its impact on shaping Black communities' understandings of

policing. Many witnessed use of excessive force or felt threatened by the police at some point in their lives. However, while discussing their experiences in policing, respondents were reticent to discuss violence and brutality.

Factors involved in this reluctance included the fact that most interviews took place in police stations with other officers nearby and the age and experience level of the officers-- younger officers were less willing to discuss brutality. Additionally, it appears that Black officers want to reduce tensions at work, lower their stress levels and not be regarded as outsiders. By adopting the police "code of silence," these officers perhaps feel that they can prove to other officers that they are not so different and increase their level of acceptance. Further, as will be discussed later, Black officers fear retaliation from their White counterparts. Respondents who have addressed issues of police brutality have prolonged harassment and experienced limited career advancement within their agency. All of these factors serve as powerful reasons for respondents not to discuss violence and brutality.

It is meaningful, therefore, that, in some manner, twenty-four respondents (48 percent) addressed the varying manifestations of police violence. Many did so indirectly, in passing or in roundabout ways; however, it became clear that this is an important topic with which they must deal.

One respondent describes how a past experience with police violence reminds him of the racial nature of police brutality:

I remember that vividly, where an officer struck a young female with his weapon across the mouth, knocking out several of her teeth. Officers knew he was wrong also and knew that he was prejudice and was abusive toward African Americans. That again, example, that would not occurred if it had been a White young lady and in a White hospital in a White community. (34)

The above incident occurred in a hospital during the middle of the day and illustrates how police brutality in the past was very common, very open and overt. Incidents such as these serve to keep the victim in a subordinate position and remind others who witness, or are aware of the event, of what could happen to them. Currently, respondents seemingly posit that, although violence disproportionately affects Black people, overt forms of violence are hidden from public view:

There has been more brutality on Black people going to jail than White folks going to jail. Well, I haven't done a study, but all I can say is what I know here. Just like the guy who was beaten so bad he's eye came out of his socket. And there's a lot. Sometime when I take a different route, some of the prisoners I have in the back of my car say, "what you going to do, take me somewhere and beat me up? I'll say, "I'm going to take you to jail." So they're expecting you to do something to them because it may have been done before. (6)

This discussion implies that brutality is frequent, although it occurs out of the general public's view and away

from officers, such as Black officers, who may not be supportive of the violence. Other respondents support this notion with discussions of how specialized divisions, that have persistently excluded Black officers, form a culture of violence and abuse which becomes accepted, promotes group solidarity and remains relatively hidden from other officers. One young respondent discusses the all White K-9 division, "Now, I've heard stories about a particular dog handler--he would release a dog on anybody and wouldn't care anything about it . . . I haven't seen it yet. I know it's there" (37). In this example, the exclusion of Black officers from the division and the form of weaponry, a dog, create encounters in which it is easier to engage in acts of violence with limited possibility of blame.

A respondent from another agency discusses how a squad of officers engaged in a persistent pattern of terrorism and, once exposed, faced little real penalty:

Just a few years ago we had an incident where this particular little squad of White officers took one Black suspect and picked him up from the predominant low socioeconomic area of the city, took him to a baseball park and did a 'ring of fire' on him. A 'ring of fire' is where they take this Black suspect and put him in the center of a ring of cars and shine their bright lights on him. It's a form of terrorism. A lieutenant filed a long handwritten complaint on it but nothing ever happened to any of these officers. What the administration did is tore this group apart, took the sergeant that was in charge and put him in charge of internal affairs. There was nothing we could do because they kinda kept it hush-hush. Nothing was ever done about it. Yep. This, is the cruelty I'm telling you about. (39)

Black officers are reluctant to become involved because of fear of retaliation and the possibility of being ostracized. Administrations further refuse to become involved due to their implicit support for such behavior, close ties shared with the offending officers, and/or reluctance to face the wrath of police unions which ardently protect police behavior from outside scrutiny. The extent of Black officer involvement in brutality is not known. Few studies have actually been undertaken and past studies have yielded contradictory findings. No respondent described an incident of violence in which they participated, although some male respondents discuss feeling the need to be macho at the beginning of their careers resulting in excessive behavior.

Many respondents posit that younger Black male officers were more likely to fall under the influence of "good old boys" and be pushed into brutality. However, almost unanimously, respondents argue that Black officers are less brutal. Reasons given include awareness of past police brutality, experiences with brutality and the fact that many of them live in the same communities that they police, unlike most White officers:

You have a little more respect, I think, for the people you're dealing with. Because if you rode anywhere in the city you'd see the same people out the window. I didn't want to mistreat a guy tonight and see him at the grocery store the next day. But it'd be different if I lived in [a White community] and I'm working over here, cause I ain't gonna see him over there. (15)

Despite reluctance to openly discuss incidents of violence, respondents clearly are aware of its persistence and the effect it has on intimidating members of Black communities to remain in subordinate roles in American society. Violence is powerful to the extent of harm suffered by a particular victim and to the extent that the victim's experience vicariously becomes part of the general knowledge of racism which guides Black people's understanding of their place in society. Although many respondents acknowledge an awareness of violence in their agencies, only four respondents (8 percent) discuss actions they have taken to address acts they have witnessed or had knowledge of. In each instance they faced severe, continuing patterns of retaliation which impacted the rest of their career. Clearly, awareness of this possibility is intimidating in and of itself.

Retaliation

A final form of containment is retaliation against those Black people who challenge what they perceive to be racism. Bringing racist ideologies or behaviors to the attention of White people creates anger, resentment, a (re)definition on the complainant as a problem to be dealt with and results in a new pattern of behavior which seeks to punish the complainant and force their silence. Fourteen respondents (28 percent) discuss how their actions

challenged existing relations of power to the extent that they encountered the wrath of fellow officers and their superior officers. One respondent discusses the result of his intervention in a case of police brutality:

[An African-American male] was on the ground and the officer kicked him and the guy started hollering and screaming and he started attracting a crowd. Then he started hollering at my partner, "Man you guys just gonna let this guy do this to me? I haven't done anything." The [White officer] got him handcuffed and my partner says, "come on let's go, we don't want to be caught in this, let's go." So, we start toward our car, we look back and somehow or other this guy's gotten loose and gotten control of the officer. And so we go back over and get him off of him and put him in the back of the car and say, "hey, look, take him and get on out of here." Which is what happened. Well, a couple of days later they called my partner and I in and said that we refused to aid him. That little rumor spread that we did not assist him so for awhile there, I guess about a year, we couldn't depend on anybody coming to assist us. We had to assist ourselves. So, if, and when they separated us, one of us was on one side of town and one was on the other, usually we didn't care what we were doing if we heard something of a serious nature come up where one of us were involved we'd just head across town because we knew that they weren't gonna come and assist us, no matter what happened. (9)

In this case, by refusing to get involved in an incident of excessive force, the officers were informally isolated from others and could not count on the backup or support. Despite their actual assistance of the offending officer, his word carried more weight than theirs and they were summarily subjected to retaliatory actions. In smaller departments, the administration can be more directly involved in shaping policies of retaliation. An officer describe part of a general pattern of racism in her agency,

"A Black police officer complained because a White police officer used excessive force, they wind up investigating the Black police officer for making the complaint. And he did nothing wrong. So, and that was the flavor there" (1).

Once targeted, the retaliation officers face is long-lasting and multi-faceted. One respondent who filed a law suit alleging racial discrimination immediately faced reassignment to the corner basement officer, found himself cut off from departmental communication and his authority destroyed:

As a result of me filing my lawsuit, I had incidents where like I would make an arrest and I'd turn them over to an officer. Like I would be off-duty, somewhere working off-duty, I'd turn them over to an officer, and next thing I know, they turn him loose, disregarding my authority as a police officer. They were subverting my authority as a police officer. (24)

Subverting authority and failing to respond to calls are more overt forms of retaliation which can threaten an officer's physical safety. However, retaliation most often includes more subtle forms of action such as the accumulation of a paper trail which serves to place officers on notice that the process of removing them from their agencies has begun and that they had better watch themselves:

I was on the Board of Directors for the National Black Police Association, and I was denied a raise because of that, one of my step raises, because of that. I took the action in court. That [was] the beginning of what we used to call 'the training,' when they want to get rid of you. They start little things just to put little letters of reprimand and discipline within your personnel

file, so if it builds up, then they can do other things to you . . . it was just a thing of where they were trying to build a case upon you so two or three years down the road, "we're going to ease this in, we're going to ease something else in, and two or three years down the road, we'll have a nice case file built upon you." (35)

As "the training" unfolds, respondents note that their potential for advancement in their agency is over, interpersonal relations are disrupted, communication with superior officers is cut off and issues of job security become constant sources of worry and stress.

Summary

I have been blackballed. In this department, I have put in for numerous transfers, I have never gotten one . . . You disassociate yourself from the job. You just do it. You become robotic. (6)

Essed (1991) and scholars in the experiential-racism tradition maintain that racism, as a manifestation of power, seeks to suppress the views of dominated people and contain them in a subordinate positions. Strategies to accomplish these goals range from constructing notions of race to open forms of antagonism and conflict. Respondents' discussions provide support for this form of racism by illustrating how they understand the efforts of White people to maintain the status quo by limiting Black people's participation in American society. These efforts involve ideologically reinforcing the inferiority of Black people and creating institutional and interpersonal practices which seek to intimidate and suppress them.

Respondents report that most White people deny that racism is a problem or that they are racist. This shifts the blame for racial problems to Black people while absolving the collective conscious of White people. Most respondents maintain that when Black people point out attitudes or acts of racism White people become angry and the complainants face backlash and retaliation. Despite claims that racism does not exist, respondents discuss how they daily encounter ways in which White people overemphasize differences between Black and White people. These range from racist talk which (re)produces stereotypes of Black inferiority to the ethnization of tasks which reinforces notions that Black people cannot competently perform certain tasks. Finally, discussions illustrate the importance of techniques employed by White people to pacify and/or intimidate Black people.

Respondents' discussion of containment strategies they have encountered provide important insight into how they come to understand White people and their reasons for treating Black people as subordinates. Experiences with racism are interactive events between Black and White people operating from competing notions of their place in the world. Respondents report how being police officers instills in them feelings of pride, purpose, responsibility and a sense of their legitimate authority. However, they report that encounters with White people generally revolve around

efforts to strip away these feelings and reinforce the subordinate position of Black officers relative to White people in general. Therefore, respondents experience how containment strategies foster a sense of White solidarity that is important to the perpetuation of differences. Discussions illustrate how White people, intentionally or otherwise, share racist notions, employ racist language and engage in racist behavior in order to conform to the expectations of others; to be part of a larger group. Respondents report how White officers have access to the greater material rewards as well as interpersonal camaraderie and emotional support because of their membership in the larger group. As their views of the world are reinforced, they accept these views as natural and just, responding harshly to any critiques they encounter in their interactions with Black people.

Findings also provide evidence for the cumulative, shared general knowledge of racism; however, they further illustrate how White strategies of containment are, in part, dependent on this process of sharing. Respondents illustrate how experiences with violence and with racist talk affect them vicariously if not personally. Intimidation is, therefore, shown to be effective to the extent that Black people communicate and share information about such encounters with White people. That Black people remember and

recount episodes of violence and intimidation to other Black people is essential to the successful containment of them as a group of people. Those who do not successfully learn these messages or reject them find themselves subjected to prolonged, tortuous periods of harassment. The resulting stress and insecurity can make an officer's daily life a living hell.

CHAPTER SEVEN CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

It is something that kinda lights a fire that smolders and burns and you just sorta think. You don't forget that in a lifetime. Those kind of memories always stick with you. I guess it's our way. Good things seems to kinda flame and then die. But the bad it, it flames up and embers. Just burns and churns and stays a lifetime which you. Yea, you know it's kinda like a bad meal you consume and then regurgitate it and taste it all over again. (7)

This project was designed to explore whether Black police officers demonstrate evidence of a cumulative, shared body of knowledge on which they rely to understand racism in general and interpret particular racist encounters. Further, the project sought to explore if they use this knowledge to identify patterns and forms of racism in policing. Studies that examine the complexity of human interaction in an attempt to understand the cultural context of experience, knowledge, and perception are rare. Studies that allow Black people to be storytellers, to develop narratives of experiences, events and their emotions are rarer. Despite a tradition of scholarly work, loosely called the "experiential-racism tradition," that stresses allowing respondents to draw on their experiences to discuss the

importance of race in their lives and the factors which structure their experiences, criminological scholars have persisted in neglecting the experiences of Black people in general and Black system agents in particular. Consequently, Black people's understandings of how the criminal justice system impacts their daily lives are largely ignored.

When incorporated in much of the existing research, "black" is often a demographic variable in a research method that is analyzed quantitatively in relation to some other variable or group of variables chosen by researchers. As discussed in the first chapter, these studies have historically produced contradictory findings and have tended to downplay the importance of race in relation to other mediating variables, although frequently the amount of variance these variables explain has been small.

To explore the understanding of race shared by Black officers and how experiences shape and are shaped by this understanding, a thematic analysis of fifty open-ended interviews was conducted to determine the impact of race on their lives. The work of scholars from the experiential-racism tradition, particularly Essed's (1991) work on "everyday racism," was used to develop sensitizing concepts to guide this analysis. Discussions of racism in American society and, as this project focused on one occupation, specific discussions about racism in policing were examined.

The ways in which Black people learn about racism and interpret events were at the heart of the analysis.

Respondents were a diverse group of men and women of different ages and from different geographical areas. Particularly meaningful for this project is that twenty-seven of the respondents (54 percent) were officers in supervisory or command positions that scholarly work has assumed to be insulated from racism by their class position. However, these successful, well-educated and well-paid respondents describe how race is an important causal factor that shapes their daily lives and the course of their careers.

The majority of respondents demonstrate through their discussions the dynamic, fluid nature of racism as a persistently detrimental force in their lives, not an abstract phenomenon of the past. Respondents' discussions illustrate persistent ideological, structural, interpersonal and attitudinal processes of (re)producing racism, which defines them as second class citizens and legitimizes barriers that block their ability to be fully equal. One veteran officer, downplaying the impact of the police occupational role in relation to the impact of race on shaping his career, succinctly sums up the sentiments of many of the respondents, "It is more stressful dealing internally with the racism that we have; if I didn't have

that problem, this job, for me, it would almost be stress free" (28).

Findings

As Black people in the US have been historically relegated to a second-class status position, I began this study by examining if there exists among members of Black communities a collective, sophisticated body of knowledge about the operation of race and racism as experiential-racism scholars maintain. Once I concluded that discussions provided a considerable amount of support for this assumption, I used the three main processes posited by Essed (1991) as maintaining racial hierarchies, marginalization, problematization and containment, as sensitizing concepts to guide a further analysis of respondents' discussions. Although these three forms of racism were found to have an ideological structure in the general society, they were further found to have specific manifestations within police agencies.

Knowledge

An examination of whether Black people have a general knowledge of the operation of racism that guides their understandings of daily encounters yields considerable supportive evidence. However, respondents' discussions outline a more complex process of learning than the cognitive approach of knowledge acquisition that guides the

work of Essed (1991). The more dynamic learning process outlined in discussions illustrates how respondents do not merely acquire but further add to and redefine the general body of knowledge about the operation of racism.

First, respondents illustrate how structural conditions and interpersonal interactions within these conditions shape the general, base knowledge of racism they acquire as well as the skills they develop to interpret the meaning of future encounters. Discussions illustrate that learning about racism in America is based on Black people's differential exposures to a range of White racist and supportive Black institutional settings that guide life decisions and shape collective and self identities. Although Black people's ubiquitous experience with racism provides them with the basis for group solidarity, differences such as gender, class, age, community, and occupational position structure the understandings of individuals.

Therefore, although racism has a persistent ideological base built on notions of Black inferiority and subordination, forms of racism are experienced and understood differently by respondents to the extent that structural and institutional processes they encounter are different. Respondents focus on the importance of family, religion, education and community organizations while growing up in providing a base of general knowledge about

the role race plays in American society. Respondents further learn to develop an interpretative methodology that allows them to understand encounters with racism as they occur. Importantly, as respondents moved into occupational settings previously denied them, such as policing, they had the necessary interpretive tools to gain a specialized knowledge of racism in this setting.

Secondly, therefore, experiential encounters are shaped by this base knowledge to the extent that respondents rely upon it, as well as their interpretive skills, to understand the meaning of encounters with racism. Respondents repeatedly illustrate how the extent of knowledge of racism needed by Black people changes as institutional settings change or as the general nature of racism transforms. For example, although a general knowledge of racism is essential to their ability to survive and adapt in a new setting, such as policing, Black people also draw on interpretive skills to develop a specialized knowledge of the operation of racism within the particular institutional setting. Understanding overt forms of racism in a new setting is often based in the general knowledge of racism Black people share. However, an understanding of subtle and covert racism in that institutional setting requires a particular ability gained through experience. To this end, Black people use methods of evaluation such as comparison and experimentation

to determine if encounters are racist as well as the factors structuring the encounter.

Importantly, experiences are not uniform and not always easy to understand; in fact, the discussions imply three primary forms of experience with racism. The first is vicarious experience, illustrating the importance of how racist encounters which impact individuals are shared collectively and affect other members of the community beyond the initial encounter (see the following paragraph). The second is 'receptive' personal experience in which respondents, in routine activities of their daily lives, are acted upon by some form of racism. The third is active, or goal-oriented, experience in which respondents consciously attempt to better understand racism through investigation, experimentation for example, or attempt to address and change some form of racism that they have previously identified as impacting their lives. Respondents report feeling that they gain more knowledge about the complexity of racism and a sense of self during a struggle.

Lastly, respondents demonstrate how information about these experiential encounters is shared with others, thereby adding to the general base of knowledge about racism within Black communities. Discussions illustrate how experiences are shared with others--becoming others' vicarious experiences. After a particular encounter, respondents

process the experience, share their interpretation with relatives and/or others and collectively decide upon its meaning. The encounter forms part of the community's shared memory of the operation of racism and has a cumulative impact on the lives of those who become aware of it. For example, older officers share knowledge of racism with younger officers, officers with experiences share with those that do not and both share with family and community members.

Illustrating the extent and sophistication of respondents' knowledge of racism is the first step in delineating its operation in policing. Respondents' discussions illustrate that their knowledge of racism includes an understanding of the complex interrelationship of many structuring factors such as economic and political processes which open windows of insight into the operation of racism. These factors affect experience and encounters with racism as well as the extent to which respondents understand these experiences and encounters as racist. Experiences with racism have a cumulative effect on respondents and others who recount the lingering impact of past encounters in shaping their self-images and life decisions. After the extent of respondents' knowledge of racism was delineated, their understanding of the current operation of racism was explored.

Marginalization

Examining barriers to Black people's equal participation in American society by using Essed's (1991) concept "marginalization," as a guide, I found that respondents' discussions delineate how this form of oppression persistently shapes the nature of race relations impacting their life experiences. Discussions illustrate how continuing patterns of segregation marginalize Black people. They are disproportionately poor, undereducated, live in substandard housing in predominantly Black communities, go to predominantly Black churches and schools and are at greater risk of violence. Most respondents agree that these isolating structural conditions form two distinct cultures, one White and the other Black. Members of these cultures do not socialize, do not have shared experiences and, therefore, lack knowledge of each other. Because "White" is considered the societal norm, members of this group are able to cognitively distance themselves from Black Americans and ignore them in daily interactions.

Discussions illustrate that these isolating patterns are important in that they create the societal framework which catalyzes knowledge acquisition processes about the operation of racism in Black communities. Further, these conditions impact policing to the extent that they limit which members of the Black community are eligible to become

police officers and reduce the level of preparedness for those who are eligible. Continuing conflict between police agencies and Black communities was discussed as important in forming the notion among Black youth that policing is not a desirable occupation. Additionally, processes that criminalize Black youth reduce the pool of eligible recruits even more as applicants with criminal records are removed from hiring consideration.

Respondents argue that barriers exist in agencies which limit advancement opportunities and which impact the longevity of Black officers' careers. These barriers vary in form ranging from subtle to covert to overt but are shown to be clearly systematic. Discussions outline how these forms of racism affect how Black officers are evaluated and disciplined, where they are assigned and if they are transferred to desirable positions or promoted. These barriers not only limit how far officers can advance but the length of their careers as well. Many respondents opt for early retirement and face further obstacles to receiving full pensions.

Respondents argue that although barriers impact all Black officers, two groups of Black officers are afforded less protection against this form of racism: rural Black officers and female Black officers. Although most research on race and policing focuses on large urban agencies,

respondents discuss how racism is more overtly hostile in rural areas and smaller agencies. Further, racism is more overt where there is no active collectivity of Black officers and little legal or political protection. Importantly, all female respondents report experiencing genderized racism--racism with strong elements of sexism--noting differences between the treatment of White women and themselves. Female respondents further discuss how increased competition for limited numbers of available positions, due to institutional barriers they encounter, increases the intensity of competition between candidates for those positions and culminates in divisions being created among Black officers in general and Black female officers specifically.

Despite contradictory conclusions drawn from much of the research on the topic, respondents clearly illustrate how barriers continually operate to exclude them from entry to policing and advancement once they are hired. These barriers vary in range from structural to occupational to individual and from ideological to attitudinal but all act to exclude Black citizens from participating equally in American society.

Problematization

Respondents discuss how ideological constructions of Black subordination are used throughout American society to

legitimize their exclusion from enjoying societal benefits as well as the repression of their attempts to address and change the nature of racial injustices. While growing up, respondents were made to feel inferior whenever they encountered White dominated institutions. They report being treated as backward and somehow less than civilized. Through frequent interactions they became aware that many White people had attitudinal notions of biological purity which denied that both White and Black people shared commonalties as human beings.

Upon entering police agencies as trained officers, respondents found that this form of racism permeated their work places. Discussions illustrate how White-dominated police agencies and many White officers continue to view Black people, including Black officers, as somehow inferior to White people. Many respondents lament how White officers continually underestimate their abilities and treat them as somehow less intelligent and less able to perform their duties. This belief promotes the disproportionately ill treatment of Black people, including Black officers by many White officers. Many respondents discuss not only first-hand experiences but witnessing various incidents in which White officers, intentionally or not, denigrate members of Black communities.

A primary example illustrated repeatedly in discussions is how Black people are criminalized in American society as an attempt to limit their advancement and continually reinforce their subordinate status. Most respondents have experienced this form of racism driving the roadways of their communities as they are repeatedly stopped and questioned by White officers; often without breaking any laws or receiving traffic citations. Other respondents report that shopping in local stores means being under continual surveillance. Daily activities that most Americans take for granted are made difficult for many of the respondents as their race marks them as being outside of the norm and, therefore, a potential threat.

Problematization as a form of racism is contingent upon ideological conditions that stimulate and legitimate other forms of racism. It allows White people to rationalize patterns of discrimination and legitimize strategies of containment. Respondents conclude that the attribution of biological, personality and cultural problems to explain Black people's secondary status in America posits, at the same time, that racism is not a causative factor in maintaining this condition. It, therefore, is very difficult to combat this form of racism; attempts to do so culminate in Black people being defined as the ones with the problem and further sanctioned in some form.

Containment

Respondents discuss how White individuals and White-dominated institutions legitimize their containment in subordinate societal and institutional positions despite their efforts to combat racism, to advance professionally and change their lives as well as the lives of other Black people. They encounter this form of racism as White people suppress Black people's definitions of reality and deny that racism currently exists while engaging in behavior that humiliates, belittles and reduces Black people to stereotypical caricatures. Many respondents discuss the pain they feel when exposed to racist jokes, cartoons and derogatory language, including racist insults.

Other respondents focus on the physical threat that White people pose to them, their families and other members of Black communities. Respondents report being intimidated by White officers acting in authoritarian manners or by threats of retaliation if they engage in behavior that is unacceptable to White officers. These behaviors act to keep them from advancing and seek to maintain their subordinate position. Many further discuss their awareness of physical violence against members of Black communities and personally experiencing reprisals for making these incidents public knowledge.

Fear of retaliation extends to collective movements of Black officers who have reached a critical mass in their agencies sufficient to implement changes in the operation of the agencies. Some respondents discuss how agencies with Black leaders and/or a critical mass of Black officers are limited in the extent of changes they can make due to this form of racism. These Black officers are forced to promote "colorblind" strategies, for example, within their agencies, not because it is in their best interest or the best interest of solving racial injustice, but to prevent White backlash. This form of retaliation occurs if Black officers are perceived of as going too far, too fast and threatening the interests of White people.

Interestingly, respondents' discussions illustrate an understanding that this form of racism, while reinforcing the racist notion that Black people belong in subordinate social positions relative to White people, also fosters a sense of White solidarity that is important to the perpetuation of differences. White people who share racist notions, employ racist language and engage in racist behavior in order to conform to the expectations of other White people, are seen by many respondents as able to share in the material rewards guaranteed White people while maintaining Black people as their subordinates.

Respondents discuss the continual stress and anxiety this form of racism promotes within policing. Continually facing monitoring, pressure to conform to White expectations and fearing retaliatory actions when they do not meet these expectations, respondents emphasize the detrimental cumulative impact of experiences with racism on their physical and emotional well being. Despite the economic rewards and prestige they are granted by virtue of this occupational position, many choose to be quiet and not address problems they see and/or choose an early retirement.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

This project develops considerable support for the notion that race is a dynamic process. Traditional distinctions between institutional and individual racism are shown to be misleading and insufficient to explain the (re)production of racial inequality in American society. Discussions illustrate that everyday racism is a complex of cumulative practices with repetition an important feature. This conception fosters a greater understanding and helps to illuminate the persistence of racism. Findings, therefore, should not be seen as isolated incidents, but as a pattern of everyday racism which has tremendous psychological impact on Black officers and economic impact on police agencies. Therefore, three primary implications can be drawn from this conclusion: methodological, theoretical and policy.

Methodological

An important implication of this project is that it demonstrates the usefulness of qualitative methodologies for criminological research. An understanding of a group's collective memory, in this case with accumulated experiences with racism, is essential to make sense of the persistent character and continuing impact of racism. Therefore, scholars who only quantitatively measure race as a demographic characteristic or see it as an overt, easily identifiable act, oversimplify racism as a force in American society and are unable to look at the diversity of racism.

Scholars have traditionally placed policing in an intellectual vacuum and neglected how other institutional settings and processes can impact the operation of racism in policing. Respondents' discussions of continuing societal patterns of segregation emphasize the importance of looking beyond institutional contexts to understand how race and racism shape policing. For example, continuing patterns of racial segregation impact the ability of agencies to successfully recruit adequate numbers of Black officers. Further, respondents' emphasize the cumulative impact of past experiences with racism in shaping their lives, how they see themselves and how they perform their jobs.

Importantly, therefore, this project shifts the focus of examining the impact of racism on policing from

discussions of Black community members in general to those responsible for the administration of justice, Black system agents. Examining their routine, everyday experiences furthers an understanding of racism in the entire social system. Consequently, an understanding of the criminal justice system can be improved by the practice of looking to the stories and viewpoints of persons of color who work in the criminal justice system and experience racism as part of their everyday lives.

For example, despite much of prior research's focus on the police subculture and the assumption that "blue is blue" and, therefore, Black officers tend to pattern their attitudes and behavior closely after that of White officers, the majority of respondents focus on differences between White officers and themselves. Instead of Black officers being violent and abusive in manners similar to White officers, respondents argue that they use their negative experiences consciously to be consistently fairer and less abusive. They further illustrate an awareness of the limited protection they are afforded by their occupational status from acts of violence and retaliation that members of the Black community do not share.

Given the space to define their experiences, respondents illustrate the complexity of the relationship between race and policing beyond the bivariate analyses

found in most criminological literature. The qualitative method used here can stand by itself or serve as an exploratory step in a larger triangulation of research methods in which findings can be further tested for their reliability. Additionally, although findings are not generalizable, similar exploratory studies can be conducted with other occupational groups.

Theoretical

Many of the findings of this study support previous work from the experiential-racism framework. Respondents' discussions provide evidence for a collective, shared knowledge of racism among members of Black communities as well as the cumulative impact of racism on individual Black people that extend well beyond the racist encounter. Vicarious experiences were discussed as having an impact on members of Black communities even when they were not party to the actual experiential encounter. Additionally, the settings of experiential encounters were shown to impact the form of racism encountered. However, experience with racism is assumed and insufficiently defined and analyzed in prior work. For example, Essed (1991) sees knowledge as the interpretive framework for experiential events, treating knowledge as prior to experience. A theoretical implication of this study is, therefore, the placement of experience as central to Black people's understanding of racism.

Richard Delgado (1995) argues that the prevailing "mindset" of dominant group members is the principal instrument by which racial hierarchies are maintained. He sees a solution in the "counterstorytelling" activities of Black people to challenge the prevailing mindset and the status quo it justifies. However, as the preceding section discussed, the ability of many Black people to produce and share their narrative is structurally limited. Factors such as dominant research methodologies and researchers' relationships with funding agencies and journals are important examples of some of the barriers encountered by counterstorytelling efforts.

Additionally, when space is created in which Black people can construct a narrative of their lives, as this project attempts to do, their "stories" are uniformly regarded as mere "perceptions" of racism. This is further indicative of how the prevailing mindset dismisses the views of subordinated groups. Perception can be defined as a means of distinguishing how things really are from how a person cognitively thinks they are. Therefore, the dismissal of the narratives of Black people as their "perceptions" grants dominant group members the disproportionate opportunity to reinterpret and redefine those narrative accounts. The result is the rejection of the "counterstories" Delgado

posits as essential to breaking racist hegemony, and the perpetuation of the dominant group's view of race relations.

If, on the other hand, narrative accounts are seen as based on experiences with racism rather than merely perceptions of racism, their meaning becomes far more powerful. Experience represents much more than a single impression at a distinct moment in time and space. It necessarily involves a series of past events, happenings and incidents that are stored in memory and thereby included in a present situation or encounter. Experience, therefore, transcends a single moment and a single individual's interpretation of that moment. Experience is necessarily cumulative and includes shared understandings making it collective as well. The net sum of individuals' and groups' experiences are shared and form the basis of the group's general knowledge of a subject, racism in this instance, and guides its members' interpretations of future experiences with that subject. The members in turn add to and refine the general knowledge of the subject based on their unique experiential encounters. Experience and knowledge are therefore dynamically interrelated and guide a group's beliefs, values and actions through a complex ever transforming social world.

Encounters are interactive moments that involve a meeting. When encounters between differing people or groups

involving distinct notions of race as a way of relating to and understanding the social world occurs, contradictions and dilemmas arise creating a fecund atmosphere for learning. Feagin and Vera (1995) concentrate on how social factors and forces shape racial events including how people's beliefs and actions impact the everyday lives of others. As respondents discuss in this project, Black and White people live in two separate worlds in which both are socialized to see the world and their place in it differently; both develop different beliefs and values about race and its importance in their lives. As individuals with these different ideas meet, the resulting conflict between their competing notions provides each an opportunity to understand what the other believes. Respondents, therefore, come to know White officers and their views through such encounters.

Respondents' discussions and their conclusions about racism are, therefore, far more than mere perceptions of isolated incidents. Their conclusions about the nature of current racism are, in fact, drawn from an accumulation of encounters and interactive moments they have shared with White people. Respondents' discussions frequently refer to their hard work, the feeling of achievement they have and the prestige they enjoy among other members of their community. Within the Black communities in which they live

these officers have climbed the social ladder and are near the top of the community's hierarchy in terms of education, income and prestige. Respondents discuss pride in their abilities and the importance of their positions to the community.

However, when they discuss encounters with White people they frequently discuss pain, humiliation and being treated as if they were second class on the hierarchical scale perpetuated in White communities. Respondents, existing simultaneously in two worlds during the course of their everyday lives, repeatedly face the contradictions between two competing social hierarchies—one in which they are near the top and the other in which they are near the bottom. The resulting contradictions allow them to develop a clearer understanding of racism in the US. As encounters multiply, so too do respondents' understanding of racism. These understandings of encounters are shared with other members of Black communities and serve as a source of information about the ever transforming nature of racism.

In summary, the most important theoretical implication of this project is its distinction between perception and experience. Respondents' discussions of their vicarious experiences and their personal experiential encounters demonstrate the importance of closely analyzing these encounters to understand more fully the complexity of Black

people's knowledge of the operation of racism in the US. Only when discussions of their experiences are not summarily dismissed as merely subjective perceptions can Black counterstorytelling effectively challenge White ideological hegemony.

Policy

A final implication of this project is, given the current political interest in promoting a national dialogue on race, that Black people must be allowed to express their understandings of the factors that shape their lives instead of being continually ignored. Change and reform must begin from a realistic understanding of the nature of racism. As White and Black people have a different relationship to racism, both must be involved in addressing the problem in order to solve it. The denial of racism and/or simplistic understandings of racism increases its legitimacy while (re)producing it.

Respondents' discussions provide evidence that racism remains an important causal factor while demonstrating some of its forms and manifestations. Most argue that, beyond the continuing patterns of segregation and isolating structural conditions that impact policing by affecting recruitment, hiring and retention, the greater the subjectivity permitted in organizational positions or processes the greater the possibility that racism can impact policies and decisions.

Respondents argue that the more one White person is responsible for a decision, the more likely that decision will be racist or experienced as racist. This is compounded by the general exclusion of Black officers from command, specialized and supervisory positions and negatively impacts training, evaluations, discipline, assignments and promotions. Respondents feel that they have no support, "no one in their corner," and no one more experienced with decision making processes who can adequately explain why a decision was reached or action taken.

Respondents illustrate the complexity of decision making processes by demonstrating an awareness that much racism is unconscious, that is, not accompanied by the actor's intent to harm or disadvantage a particular Black victim; it seems customary, right and inoffensive to those engaged in it. Supporting Feagin and Vera's (1995) notion of White "sincere fictions," respondents understand that much of the racism they encounter is unintentional and is reflective of the socialization of White people which shapes their views of themselves and of Black people. This finding has tremendous implications for legal doctrine and criminal justice discourse, which, for the most part, require demonstration of intent to prove that racism is a factor in a process or an event.

Despite transformations in the general nature of racism reported by many of the respondents--to covert and/or subtle forms of racism--discussions illustrate that overt racism increases when: 1) the chief and/or supervisors allow it or when there are no progressive leaders (White or Black) pushing for change; 2) there is a lack of a critical mass of Black officers pushing for changes--the greater Black unity, the less overt forms of racism generally encountered; 3) there is an inability to rely on legal remedies for protection; 4) it is combined with sexism which, particularly in a traditionally male occupation, provides less protection for women against barriers to advancement; 5) officers move from the department itself to public places that offer less insulation through identifying markers such as uniforms, badges and police cars.

Importantly therefore, respondents illustrate how overt forms of racism are generally encountered less frequently in police agencies when respondents have legal recourse, are shielded by collectivities of Black officers and/or their rank as well as the power vested in their positions. Most respondents argue that for smaller and rural agencies, which are the overwhelming majority of agencies, where there is no Black collectivity or progressive leaders, legal remedies remain the essential form of protection that must not be dismantled. In an era of attacks on Affirmative Action

programs and protections against racial and gender bias, respondents feel that dismantling these programs would foster increased racism in all forms. Considering their experiences, respondents almost unanimously agree that racist behavior is curtailed only when the costs of that behavior are high.

Respondents argue, however, that racist attitudes are more difficult to monitor and control. As discussed above, subjectivity in essential positions must be curtailed as much as possible. Beyond ensuring that more Black officers are hired through the use of cadet programs, for example, they must also be able to move into essential positions and allowed to impact the daily operation of agencies without the fear of reprisals. Other remedies to racist attitudes include greater cooperation between racial groups over time and better training programs. Some respondents report success with "salt 'n pepper" squads in that they increase familiarity and provide officers from different racial groups and genders and opportunity to talk and learn to rely on each other. Most respondents argue that multi-cultural sensitivity programs could be effective in breaking down racial and gender distrust but many such programs are currently perfunctory and ineffective--promoting more animosity than solutions.

Additionally, noting how conflict between police agencies and Black communities negatively impact the daily operation of policing in the US, respondents are almost unanimous in their support for Community Oriented Policing (COPS) programs. These programs bring officers and community residents closer together in meeting problems, planning strategies and working to make communities more livable. Importantly, COPS works to break down barriers to communication between communities and agencies and promotes an opportunity for increased understanding thereby reducing tension and potentially violent incidents. Many respondents feel that some COPS programs are currently very successful while many remain perfunctory, more interested in attracting funds and publicity than in fostering actual changes.

A final policy implication of this study relates to the levels of stress that respondents report. Clearly most feel that reductions in racism will reduce stress and improve their health. However, counseling and health monitoring programs could be effectively used, not to punish ill health through reassignment, for example, but to detect potential problems and help officers handle the incredible amount of stress and anxiety that they feel. Many older respondents report heart problems such as high blood pressure and many know of fellow officers who have suffered heart attacks or breakdowns due to the inability to deal with their emotions.

In summary, the implications drawn from respondents' discussions are varied and not easily translated into practical solutions. However, allowing Black officers an opportunity to define the world in which they live and work is an important first step in honestly understanding the depth and breadth of the current operation of racism as well as developing solutions to address it adequately.

Summary

Most Black people live up to the American creed of freedom, justice, equality and equal opportunity; however, persistent racism maintains them in subordinate positions and denies their efforts to achieve equality. Dulaney (1996) maintains that policing was created to suppress and control Black people, but due to the efforts and experiences of Black officers, has become the measure of Black acceptance and progress in modern society. Therefore, to the extent that color stigma impacts the lives of these successful, dedicated public servants in various settings, through various forms and serves to structure their self-definitions and the course of their lives, Black people generally have not progressed very far. Despite the difficulties they continually face and an uncertain future, respondents posit that their activities play a multi-faceted role in addressing racism, combating it and creating a more racially just society:

A lot of these community members know the Black officers, so that helps, whereas before, they didn't have that . . . The African American community saw the police as the enemy because they didn't come into their community unless they were called to make an arrest, so that was the only encounter they got from them. Now, we have Black troopers that are serving as recruiters, we have Black troopers that are serving as public information officers, DARE officers. You know, they go into the schools and they put on programs and talk to the kids and the kids see this diversity in every agency that they've come in contact with, so they feel that, hey, "if I want to be a policeman, I can be a policeman; if I want to be a deputy, I can be a deputy," and it opens up more opportunity for more diversity because it sends a positive message. I think the same is true for females, it's given us a lot of resources where before, we didn't have them. (42)

APPENDIX
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Why did you choose a career in law enforcement?
2. Do you have a good support network?
3. What do you bring to the job that is different from others?
4. In general, what makes a good police officer?
5. What are the advantages/disadvantages of being an African American officer?
6. Have you faced 'barriers' to equal employment opportunities?
7. How does your job advancement opportunities compare with other officers?
8. Describe your relationship with co-workers and supervisors.
9. Describe your experience with departmental administration and how it has affected you.
10. Describe the effects of African American recruitment on police departments.
11. Describe your experiences with the communities in which you work.
12. Discuss the effects on police/community relations made by the hiring of African American officers.
13. Are African American officers more effective working with African American suspects/prisoners?
14. Describe your experiences as a community member.

15. Describe physical, emotional and psychological costs of policing you've experienced. (if applicable)
16. What does your life look like from where you're at now?
17. What would you do to make your department better?
18. What would you do to improve life in communities?

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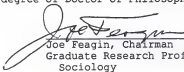
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

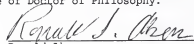
Kenneth H. Bolton Jr. Is a native of Philippi, West Virginia. He grew up in Altavista, Virginia and graduated from Altavista High School in 1978. After receiving a BA in Sociology from George Mason University in 1984, he served as a member of the Peace Corps in Bele, Senegal until 1988. He received a MA in sociology from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 1992 and entered the sociology program at the University of Florida in 1994.

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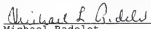
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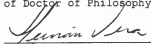
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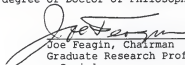
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